T.N. RAMACHANDRAN

St. Sekkizhar's

PERIYA PURANAM

PART - I

TAMIL UNIVERSITY

THANJAVUR - 613 001

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PERIYA PURANAM
Part - I

Translated by

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FOREWORD

It is now well settled that the Upamanyu Bhakta Vilasa in Sanskrit is a translation of St.Sekkizhar's hagiography in Tamil. Again, the Agastya Bhakta Vilasa in Sanskrit is but an adaptation of the Periya Puranam. The sublime work of St.Sekkizhar had inspired many a poet of the Dravida Desa, to indite, each in his own tongue, the lives of the sixtythree Nayanmar.

According to Sri N.Sethuraman, a research scholar of perspicacious perception, St.Sekkizhar commenced the *arangketram* of the Tiru-th-Thondar Puranam (the explication of the work in the assembly of the learned) on an Adirai day, 4 April 1139 and concluded it on an Adirai day, 22 April 1140. Within 60 years, that is in 1200 A.D., HariHara came out with his version of this Puranam in Kannada. The work of Palkuriki Somanatha, the celebrated Telugu poet, was also patterned on the Periya Puranam.

The University of Madras thought fit to bring out a modern and literal translation of the Periya Puranam into the Kannada with a transliteration of the original in Kannada. Two volumes have already appeared and the publication of the third and last volume is awaited.

Dr.G.U.Pope did his best to popularise the Periya Puranam in the West. Some of his vignettes pertaining to a few Nayanmar were included in his translated work, the Tiruvachakam. As a teacher, he appealed to the student-world, decades ago, through an article of his which appeared in the Indian Magazine And Review, thus: "Every Tamil student should read the truly marvellous Periya Puranam." Short lives in prose of some of the Nayanmar were brought out by J.M.Nallaswami Pillai and M.S.Purnalingam Pillai. They were good in their own way. Credit goes to the Tamil University for publishing for the first time, the complete version of this puranam in English.

St. Sekkizhar was for some years the prime-Minister of King Anapaya,

also known as Kulotthunga II. It is at the request of his king and his cabinet, the poet-saint wrote the hagiography of the canonised saints of southern Saivism. His grand opus deals with the lives and times of the glorious servitors of Siva, and spans several centuries. The characters celebrated in this Puranam are historic, not mythic, personages. This Puranam is at once historic and authentitic, and therefore unique.

The acts of some of the Nayanmar may appear to be inhuman and incomprehensible. In this connection, the observations of Dr.K.R.Srinivasa Iyengar are full of significance. "And although, taken at their face value, incidents like one saint surrendering or sacrificing his wife, another his daughter's ravishing tresses, a third weighing in the balance himself and his all for redeeming a promise or fulfilling a duty, may seem something like devotional 'overkill' to-day, the principle sought to be illustrated and established, is surely this: in this mysterious calculus of God-love there can be no second to the Divine, and all is resolved and redeemed in the burning brazier of His Grace."

Many are the pathways that lead to God, and everyone is entitled to pursue one of these. Indeed before God who is Himself the way as well as the goal, all men are equal. The hunter (St.Kannappan), the potter (St.Tirunilakantar), the harijan (St.Nandanar), the weaver (St.Nesar), the fisherman (St.Atipatthar), the washerman (St.Tirukkurippu-th-Tondar), the toddy-tapper cum warrior (St.Yenati Nayanar), the oilmonger (St.Kaliyar), the tiller (St.Arivattayar), the merchant (St.Amarnitiyar), the neatherd (St.Anaya Nayanar), the general (St.Kotpuli), the temple-priest (St.Pukazh-th-Thunai Nayanar), the sovereign (St.Pukazh Chola), the householder (St.Apputi) and a host of others, each one pursuing his walk of life, came to be equally blessed by Lord Siva. The House of Devotion has many mansions and accommodates all true servitors.

The relevance of the Periya Puranam in modern times is immense. Service to God and man is its central message. The appearance of an Englished version of the Puranam now, is therefore opportune. The translation is done by Sekkizhar Adi-p-podi Thiru T.N.Ramachandran who is a practitioner of Saivism. He is an acknowledged cognoscente of Saiva Siddhantam, and no wonder, his pen has produced a transcreation which is at once authentic and admirable.

Tamil University has recently launched an ambitious project, 'Translation of Tamil Classics in English' and I am very happy to say that within a short span of time several works have been taken up. Classics like

1. Cilappathikaram
2. Manimekalai
3. Bharati Patalkal
4. Thirukkovaiyar and
5. Periyapuranam

have been completed and many more are in progress.

I am sure that these translations will be of great use to understand the poetic tradition of Indian Literature in general and Tamil Literature in particular.

Thanjavur,
10-9-'90.

Dr. C. Balasubramanian,
Vice-Chancellor.

PREFACE

It is to Brahma Sri Suga Brahmam Ramaswami Sastrikal I owe my initiation into the holy hagiography -- the Periya Puranam. His discourse at Thanjavur (1960) which lasted for forty days, revealed to my till-then-blind eyes *Profundum lumen.* In the invigorating company of Tiruvachakamani K.M.Balasubramanian, I listened to the catena of lectures, and in the end emerged a wiser man. I dedicate this, my humble work, to Suga Brahmam, the living commentary of the Periya Puranam.

Two decades ago, the Tamil savant of massive erudition -- Palliakaram N.Kandaswami Pillai --, suggested to me that I should translate the Periya Puranam. Unaware of my utter inadequacy, I made a venturesome beginning. The outcome was a still-born child. When in 1973, my mentor Triloka Sitaram shed his mortal coil, the mantle of the editorship of SHIVAJI fell on my none-too-strong shoulders. Once again I revived my effort and my translation was serialised in that bilingual journal. Then came the confrontation, formidable and revelatory at once. My nescience of Tamil Saivism blocked my progress. However, by the grace of Grace, I took to the cultivation of Saiva Siddhantam. Ere long, I became acquainted with its outline. I also continued to translate other works. A review of Siva Sri C.N.Singaravelu of my translation of Bharati's 'Kuyil Paattu', which appeared in the scholarly journal *Saiva Siddhanta* (Vol. XV.p.158) ended with this note: "The author (T.N.R.) in his preface has been autobiographical and instrospective, and we are glad that 'he lives to-day in the cool shade cast by the sacred feet of St.Sekkizhar, with a mind enlivened by the divine light of Saiva Siddhanta.' Let us hope and pray that Lord Nataraja will soon guide him to undertake a full translation of Sekkizhar's Periyapuranam into mellifluous English verse, a task which he alone can undertake." This was high praise and I did not merit it. Yet it kept my desire for translating the entire puranam, alive.

Meanwhile, I took to translating the Tirukkovaiyar and completed it on 30-4-1983. On 13-8-1983, I was blessed to commence my translation of the Periya Puranam and by the grace of my deity who is St.Sekkizhar, I brought it to a successful close on 19-2-1985.

During this period, I dwelt among the great. I graduated in servitorship. I held fast to the sixtythree pairs of feet, pure and purifying. I did, no doubt, suffer, struggle and sudate. Yet my inner sensorium was suffused with that light which irradiated the pages of St.Sekkizhar's and made them luminous. I have seen and heard the Holy Writ.

When I presented my typed script to the former Vice-Chancellor Prof. S.Agesthialingom, he took immediate steps to have it scrutinised by Prof. T.B.Siddhalingaiah and Prof. K.G.Seshadri, and these went through my work with a fine tooth-comb and announced a verdict in favour of publication. The present Vice-Chancellor Prof. C.Balasubramanian, an ardent admirer of St.Sekkizhar, did everything in his power to see the work in print. To these scholars, I am grateful.

In the past, many books in English, dealing with the Periya Puranam have appeared. The following is a select list:

1. Biography of Tirugnanasambanthar by S.Sabaratnam, 1920.
2. St. Sekkizhar's Periya Puranam, Part I, by J.M.Nallaswami, 1924.
3. Nanda by G.Ratnam Pillai, 1928.
4. Tirumangai Alvar and Tirugnanasambandar, Longmans, 1928.
5. Nanda the Pariah Saint by C.S.Rangaswamy Aiyangar, N.D.
6. Seven Saints, Kazhakam.
7. St.Appar - His Life and Teachings, by M.S.Purnalingam Pillai, 1934.
8. A re-edition of item 2 with additions, edited by J.M.Somasundaram, 1955.
9. The Saints of India by T.M.P.Mahadevan, 1961.
10. Sixtythree Nayanmar Saints by Swami Sivananda, 1962.
11. The Grand Epic of Tamil Saivism by Yogi Suddhananda Bharati, 1970.
12. Women Saints of Tamil Nadu by M.Arunachalam, 1971.
13. Harijan Saints of Tamil Nadu by M.Arunachalam, 1977.
14. Saints of India by Anna, 1977.

13. Harijan Saints of Tamil Nadu by M.Arunachalam, 1977.

14. Saints of India by Anna, 1977.

15. Glimpses of Tamil Culture Based on Periya Puranam by Nambi Arooran, 1977.

16. The Story of Saiva Saints by K.M.Venkataramiah, 1979.

17. A Study of St.Tirugnanasambandar by Dr.P.Soundara, 1979.

18. Pearls from Periya Puranam by Venkatesa Natarajan, 1982.

19. Appar by G.Vanmikanathan, 1983.

20. Karaikkal Ammaiyar by Dr.Sasivalli, 1984.

21. Periya Puranam - Condensed English Version, by G.Vanmikanathan, 1985.

22. The Saiva Saints by M.Arunachalam, 1985.

23. Tirugnanasambandar (Philosophy and Religion) by Dr.P.S.Somasundaram, 1986.

24. Saint Nandanaar by A.Padmanaban, I.A.S., 1986.

25. G.U.Pope's Five Nayanmar edited by T.N.R., 1987.

26. The Vision of Siva In Periya Puranam by Ratna Ma Navaratnam, 1987.

27. Slaves of the Lord by Vidhya Dehejia, 1988.

28. Hinduism edited by O' Flaherty, 1989.

29. Siva-Bhakti by Dr.R.Nagaswami, 1989.

30. Ten Tamil Saints by M.S.Prunalingam pillai, N.D.,

31. Religion And Mysticism In The Periya Puranam by R.Gopalakrishnan, 1990.

Of these, only two, namely Periya Puranam by G.Vanmikanathan and The Saiva Saints by M.Arunachalam, have, to an extent, dealt with the whole of the Periya Puranam. However the gratuitous obiter dicta of G.Vanmikanathan, his erroneous comprehension of hermeneutics and his cavalier

approach -- though occasional --, have damaged his work very much. Too many errors of the press, indifference to grammar, misdirected periegeses, unexpected solecisms, harsh comments and faulty memory have marred *The Saiva Saints*. In such circumstances, a faithful translation in English verse of the whole of the Periya Puranam became a desideratum. I have endeavoured to supply this want, in my own humble way, fully alive to the truth that the Periya Puranam, in one sense, is hagiography, sacred biography and also 'enacted biography' and in another, none of these but a genre all its own.

I am aware of my inadequacy. I am alike very much alive to the greatness of the Periya Puranam and my innate smallness. Mine is but an attempt to give in English, a readable version, free from errors. My success, if any, in this connection, is attributable to Siva-k-Kavimani C.K.Subramaniya Mudaliyar whose commentary on the Puranam is a Maha-Bhashya in every sense of the term. I am also indebted to Mazhavai Mahalingier, Sri-la-Sri Arumukha Navalar, Arumukha Tambiran, Subbarayalu Nayakar, Aalalasundaram Pillai and Tiru.Vi.Ka. My debt to His Holiness, the 26th Pontiff of Dharmapura Aadhinam is immeasurable. His Holiness, it is well known, is the greatest authority on the Tirumurais in general and the Periya Puranam in particular.

I do not claim that my translation is translucence itself. I only say that I cannot be accused of desipience or despicable misrepresentation. I crave the reader his indulgence for my lack of consistency with regard to the spelling of certain names and places.

I must, in passing, say that I have, by the grace of Lord Siva, durst to do that which has hitherto been considered impossible of performance. This is not at all a note of arrogance, but of exultation. The Periya Puranam in its entirety is presented to the public, in English, for the first time.

Like all translations, mine too is tentative. It is my wish and prayer that sooner or later, mine should be replaced by a better one. As T.S.Eliot observed: "Each generation must translate for itself."

In the words of Prof.K.R.Srinivasa Ayyangar, the message of the Periya Puranam is this: "In the mysterious calculus of God-love, there can be no second to the Divine, and all is resolved and redeemed in the burning brazier of His Grace."

To Pulavar C.Elangovan, I convey my thanks for the keen interest he evinced in this publication. I render special thanks to Thiru M.Balakrishnan who with his lynx-eyes, went through the proofs. The typed script for Art-Print was aesthetically prepared by Thiru D.Balasubramanian and Selvi K.Hemamalini. It is to them this work owes its artistic get-up. I heartily thank them and all the members of the Publication Department of the Tamil University whose collective endeavour has produced this elegant work.

I desire to make special mention of Siva Sri P.Arul Namachivayan, my colleague and co-servitor in Saivism, for having totally identified himself with this work at all its stages. He cheerfully bore the ennui of correcting proofs. Without his precious help I would have but fared ill, as my eye-sight from the very inception of my translation-work, became partially impaired. For the welfare of him who is my eye as well as heart, I offer sincere prayers.

Ellam Aran Namame Soozhka!

Thanjavur,
10-9-'90.

Sekkizhar Adi-p-Podi
T.N.Ramachandran.

INTRODUCTION

It is good to remember, at the outset, that the *Periya Puranam* is a vast and lofty mountain range, the peaks of which are unscalable by ordinary mortals. There are many *puranams* which are bigger than the *Periya Puranam* in size and bulk. However, it is only this *puranam* which is called the *Periya Puranam*. The Sanskrit word *maha* is the equivalent of the Tamil word *periya*.

In his introduction to the *Ramayan* of Valmiki, R.T.H. Griffith observes: "As I proceed beyond the age of Kalidasa there appears before me a great epic monument to which Indian tradition ascribes a most remote antiquity so far as to make Vyasa the compiler of the Vedas its author. This monument is the *Mahabharata*. I bow before this colossal epic ...." Griffith, a Chela of the celebrated Indologist H.H.Wilson, was swept off his feet by the mere immensity of the *Mahabharata*, an epic four times as big as that of Valmiki's *Ramayana*. And *Ramayana*, it is well known, is two times as big as that of the combined bulk of Homer's *Odyssey* as well as *Illiad*. It is no wonder therefore that scholars call *Bharatam*, *Mahabharatam*. If size or bulk is the criterion, then before the Brobdingnagian *Mahabharata*, the *Periya Puranam* is but a Lilliputian. As size, per se, is of no account, the *Periya Puranam*, a mere *Vamana* in appearance is truly a *Trivikrama*. This *Puranam* is truly great and grand as it is a recordation of the lives and mystic experiences of *Atiyar's* than whom none is greater. An *Atiyar* is one who is devoted to, and is eventually oned with, the feet of Siva -- the Ens Entitum. The word *Ati* means foot and an *Atiyar* is he who clings to the feet of Lord Siva, as his sole palladium.

The invocatory verse of *Bharatam patiya Perumthevanar* prefixed to the *Aingkurunooru* affirms thus:

"The threefold cosmos evolved in due order
From the shade of the two feet
Of the Supreme One who is concorporate
With the bejewelled and blue-hued Uma."

Tiruvalluvar the Tamil *Vates*, in his invocatory decad of distichs, refers but to the feet of the Lord. Even a foreign Christian missionary who chooses Tamil Nadu for his ministry, by and by, grows alive to the supreme greatness of the Lord's feet. It is with these words the preface of Winslow's A Comprehensive Tamil and English Dictionary, concludes: "Amidst the various hindrances and discouragements which have attended the prosecution of this work, and made its wheels drag heavily, and sometimes to stop, it is only by the special blessings of God, that it has been concluded. At the feet of JEHOVAH-JESUS it is humbly laid...."

Thus does the Tamil Veda affirm:

"The stormy seas of das Weibliche and the like
Cannot be crossed save by those who cling
To the feet of the Lord who is the ocean of righteousness."

So, the goal of life is the attainment of the feet of the Lord. It is GRACE which constitutes the feet of the Lord. The feet of the Lord stand for *Tiruvati Gnanam* which is Gnosis. It is this that is also hailed as *Pati Gnanam*. *Pati*, the Lord, is gained through *Pati Gnanam*. In other words, Grace is gained by and through Grace.

The *Periya Puranam* has its source and being in the feet of Siva to which are ineluctably attached the *Atiyars*. The place of the devotee's head is the feet of the Lord. It is this union which is the Siddhantic union of *adwaitam*. This non-separateness is indicated by the vocable *Thatalai* which is composed of *Thal* (Foot) and *Thalai* (Head). *Thatalai* is the beatitude in which the servitor thrives. He is the liberated while yet alive. This felicity continues endlessly even when he shuffles off his mortal coil.

The mission of life is fulfilled when God-approved *atiyarhood* is gained. To be an *atiyar*, a servitor of God, is all. An *atiyar* is a servitor of God as well as His servitors. Nambi Aroorar longed for this beatitude. This is described by St. Sekkizhar thus:

"In the *Devasiriyan mantapam* of the brow-eyed Lord
Had gathered besides the celestials innumerable devotees;
When he beheld them he fervently thought thus:
"Oh for the day when I will become their servitor!" - Verse 335.

Possessed by this thought he moved into the temple. To get blessed as a servitor of the servitors of Siva, he began to invoke and extol the Lord's

feet to which His servitors are ever devoted. Nambi Aroorar is thus portrayed to us by St. Sekkizhar, in this, his prayerful attitude.

"'I will sure become a servitor of the servitors!'
As thus love did impel him, he bowed
Before the huge and victorious inner tower
Decked with many a flag,
And moved in, with hands folded above his head;
He was then blessed with a vision of the Lord
Who wears fragrant and beauteous *konrai* flowers;
He bowed low and as it were, wore His feet on his crown. - 336.

"Ha! They manifest even before me, the undeserving!
The superb honey of supreme *ananda*, vast and great,
Gushes from the lotus-hearts of true devotees,
And is for ever buzzed over by the bees which are
The Vedas great that can confer eternal life. - 337.

"They danced for the redemption of the world;
They frowned to death Death;
When they were gently pressed by the roseate hands
Of Himavant's daughter of garlanded coiffure,
They turned red and rubicund. - 338.

"They blaze in the hearts of *tapaswis* poised in piety;
They set even the nescient straight;
They soar as light and are the inner light of light;
They are beyond the ken of *Vishnu*, the primal boar
And *Brahma* too. - 339.

"They are enthroned on the tusker -- the Vedas;
They forgive my sins -- a fool --, and rule me;
They promise to forgive my sins in future too;
Oh, Your lotus-feet, my Lord and God of *Bhootas!*" - 340

As thus Nambi Aroorar prayed rapturously, Lord Siva was pleased to confer on him that which he sought. The Lord blessed him with the knowledge to comprehend the traditional and unbroken servitorship of the immortal devotees. In His infinite mercy He explicated to him the glory of the servitors.

Both Saivism and Vaishnavism hold that the Lord is devoted to His devotees. The *Bhagawata Puranam* calls Him *Bhakta Bhaktiman*, (a devotee of devotees). Siva calls Himself *Atiyarukku Eliyan Ambalavanan*, (Nataraja -- the Humble One for the devotees). He is so because He is One who is not to be won by knowledge or wealth, but by devotion (bhakti) only. St. Manickavacakar describes Him as One "caught with the net of Bhakti."

Atiyars are *bhaktas* and the servitors of servitors are the *bhaktas* of *bhaktas.* One of the titles of His Holiness, the Pope, is "servus servorum Dei" (a servant of the servants of God).

The Lord's love for His devotee is excelled by His love for the devotee's devotee. The devotees and their devotees form the holy company -- the hallowed assembly. Of them Siva says:

"As for glory, they alone are their equals;
By their service they own Me; being one with Me
They have won the world; they are absolutely flawless;
They are uniquely poised; by reason of their love
They are immersed in bliss; they have beyonded duality." - 342

Indeed Lord Siva commanded St. Sundarar thus:

"Poised in piety, pay obeisance to them and hail them
In verse-garlands of unflawed Truth." - 343

When he was thus bidden by the Lord Himself, St. Sundarar doubted his capacity for the performance of the ordained task; he felt so diffident. Addressing the Lord he said:

"Wherefore can I hymn, and in what way?
Who am I, my Lord? Do deign to grant me in grace
The valiancy to hail them in hymn and psalm." - 34ℓ

One is reminded of the reply by Moses to the Lord when he was commanded by Him to proceed to Egypt to liberate the children of Israel. The Bible (Exodus 3: 11) says, "And Moses said unto God, 'Who am I that I should go unto Pharaoh and that I should bring forth the children of Israel out of Egypt?'" O Moses, thy name is Humility.

It is humility which is the hallmark of servitorship. Devoteedom is egolessness. The devotee's surrender to the Lord is total and complete. "Surrender in warfare and politics" says S.S.Cohen, "is naturally an ignominous defeat, but in the spiritual warfare it is a victory of which none is capable but a hero of the highest order." That is why St. Sekkizhar says:

"Can I ever in words describe the peerless heroism
of these devotees?" - 144.

Again in verse 347 he characterises the heroism of the devotees as deathless.

Heroes, one should know, are tough-minded, some more pronouncedly and some less; but all of them are tough-minded. Firmness of purpose marks them. No lukewarmness or perfunctoriness can ever characterise a devotee.

Martin Luther King quotes a French philosopher who says: "No man is strong unless he bears within his character antitheses strongly marked." This should not surprise us, for the strong man, according to Martin Luther King, "holds in a living blend strongly marked opposites." This *balance of opposites* which is not at all ambivalence, is achieved only by the truly great.

Soft-mindedness is a cuss. It is ever after 'easy answers and half-baked solutions.' It is pleased with half-truths, truncated versions and perverted facts. It is marked by cowardice. When Jesus sent forth his disciples 'as sheep in the midst of wolves' he gave them 'a formula for action'. Jesus said: "Be ye therefore wise as serpents and harmless as doves." The serpent and the dove, according to Luther King, symbolise the tough mind and the tender heart.

No man's heart was more tender than Rama's. Did he not *kill* Vali? Much ink had spilt in an attempt to denigrate Rama and the tirade against him seems to be endless. However in three sentences Rev. S.W.Savarimuthu explicates the truth. He says: "Did Rama kill Vali? Yes, He did kill him. No, by taking away his life, He gave it back to him, a fuller and more abounding life." (Divine Justice According to Kambar and Luther -- p.8). One forgets at one's peril these words of extraordinary wisdom. The functioning of a tender heart is portrayed here in simple words which breathe utter clarity. The concept that is plainly manifest in these words, gives us the golden key to open the mystical doors of the grand opus which is the *Periya Puranam*. A tender heart will not be afraid to inflict pain if that is part of the planned cure.

The devotee is a purified soul. He is himself a purifier. Purification, by its very nature, is a pain-inflicting job. More often than not, the acts of the devotee appear to be unpalatable.

"Even as the parents and the kinnery
Of ailing children suffer their ailments
To be diagnosed with care by doctors,
And submit them to painful treatment harsh
Of cauterization or surgery
With heated instruments, or the peeling
Of the film that veils the orbs of their eyes,
And on recovery feel full delighted
And reward them that caused pain and anguish
To their children, and even as the Monarch
Who ran his car over his son to purge him
Of his killing a calf caught in his car,
The Lord witnesseth the hellish tortures
Thrust on lives by Yama's angry servants;
May that cruel Kindliness us protect!"

Thus sings St. Umapati in his *Potri-p-pahrotai*.

A truly tender-hearted person is ever brave and heroic and never maudlin. His actions are informed by firmness of purpose and they are never wishy-washy. A devotee worth the name is at once tender-hearted and tough-minded. He swerves not from his path of devotion however hard his pilgrimage may prove to be. His goal is the good and not the pleasant. "He who chooses the good attains happiness; he who prefers the pleasant loses his object." This is an upanishadic affirmation.

The *Periya Puranam* sings the glories of the soldiers of Siva -- the tough-minded and tender-hearted warriors of faith. No nation should encourage or produce soft-minded milksops or heartless savages who, sooner or later, would cause its spiritual death.

The *Periya Puranam* is to be cultivated in this light. We will narrate hereunder the life of Kotpuli Nayanar by way of illustration. One ought not to put to one's own use what belongs exclusively to God. This one lesson should never be lost sight of.

St. Kotpuli was a general of the Chola king. He expended his wealth on God and the servitors of God. Once he had to proceed on an expedition. Before he would do so, he set apart all the paddy he had, for the daily *neivedyam* of Siva. He declared that this was solely to be used for that purpose. He pronounced a curse on him that would dare touch it for his personal use. It was corban and therefore inviolable. A few days after his departure, a famine swept his town. His relations then decided that they could use the paddy for purposes of survival and later on replenish the depleted stock. They consumed the paddy. Meanwhile St. Kotpuli who was crowned with success in the war, returned. On his arrival he came to know of the sin committed by his kith and kin. He invited the sinners, one and all, to his house, and put them all to the sword. Only one child was left. His servant implored him thus: "Please spare this child; this had not tasted the accursed food." He but said this in vain. "This child" said St. Kotpuli, "was fostered on the breast-milk of her who ate the paddy." St. Kotpuli threw up the child in the air and sliced it into two, with his fulgurous tsurugi.

Not many can to-day stomach the act of St. Kotpuli. But then a *Nayanar* strives not for the approval of man. His master is God and he is righteous in the light of God. Judged by Biblical standards, what St. Kotpuli did, was absolutely right. We will place before the reader an episode from the Bible. Chapter 6, Joshua, opens thus: "Now Jericho was straitly shut up because of the children of Israel: none went out, and none came in. And the Lord said unto Joshua, See, I have given into thine hand Jericho, and the king thereof, and the mighty men of valour." God then disclosed to Joshua a plan to capture the town. However God laid a condition. From that accursed city no article was to be taken and kept by anyone. All articles should come into the treasury of the Lord. The city was duly taken. "But the children of Israel committed a trespass in the accursed thing; for A-chan,

the son of Car-mi, the son of Zab-di, the son of Ze-rah, of the tribe of Judah, took of the accursed thing: and the anger of the Lord was kindled against the children of Israel."

When Joshua, to capture A-i, sent out a reconnoitring party, all his men got killed. "And Joshua rent his clothes, and fell to earth upon his face before the ark of the Lord until the eventide, he and the elders of Israel, and put dust upon their heads." Thereupon *the Lord said unto Joshua:* "Get thee up, wherefore liest thou thus upon thy face? Israel hath sinned, and they have also transgressed my covenant which I commanded them: for they have even taken of the accursed thing, and have also stolen, and dissembled also, and they have put it even among their own stuff." Eventually A-chan confessed his guilt. The Bible describes the punishment meted out to A-chan thus: "And Joshua, and all Israel with him, took A-chan the son of Ze-rah, and the silver, and the garment, and the wedge of gold, and his sons, and his daughters, and his oxen, and his asses, and his sheep, and his tent, and all that he had: and they brought them unto the valley of A-chor. And all Israel stoned him with stones, and burned them with fire, after they had stoned them with stones."

We dare not articulate one word against what is narrated in the Bible. Milton counsels us thus: "Tax not divine disposal." We totally endorse the message of his Chorus that sang thus:

"Just are the ways of God,
And justifiable to men;
Unless there be who think not God at all,
If any be, they walk obscure,
For of such doctrine never was there school,
But the heart of the fool,
And no man therein doctor but himself."

The life of a devotee is fundamentally different from the lives of others. William Law says: "Devotion signifies a life given, or devoted to, God. He, therefore, is the devout man, who lives no longer to his own will, or the way and spirit of the world, but to the sole will of God; who considers God in everything, who serves God in everything, who makes all the parts of his common life parts of piety, by doing everything in the Name of God, and under such rules as are conformable to His glory." The life of a devotee, it can be learnt from the *Periya Puranam*, is a visible exercise and demonstration of his love for God and His devotees.

A person becomes a devotee thanks to the grace of God. "Spiritual surrender, we are told, is not a mental, still less an oral act, but the result of Grace which comes in its own time and of its own accord to cause the automatic subsidence of that self-asserting element in the *sadhaka's* nature which stands in his own way to ultimate realisation. Sometimes it is sudden

and sometimes it is so gradual that the devotee may not become aware of it. The Grace although it comes from the Guru by his very ripening presence is not fortuitous, but fully earned by hard internal fight, by long long periods of suffering, of prayers, of self-purification and of intense yearning for release." (Guru Ramana, pp. 12-13). Devotees are therefore the chosen of the Lord. Therefore did St. Sundarar feel diffident when he was commanded to hail the devotees in flawless verse-garlands of truth. The Lord, in His infinite mercy, initiated him in this holy hierurgy and even helped him with the first line of the verse to be sung by him. The Lord commanded St. Sundarar thus: "I am a servitor to the servitors of the Brahmins who dwell at Tillai: so sing."

Armed with the blessed words of the Lord, Aroorar moved toward the assembly of devotees. As he beheld the Holy Company even from at a distance, he adored them, times without number. He hailed those devotees of deathless heroism and owned himself as a servitor of each one of them. He also affirmed that he was a servitor of the various groups of servitors. Thus St. Sundarar sang his hymn which is today hailed as the *Tiru-th-tonda-th-tokai*. The *Periya Puranam* is but an extraordinary amplification of this wondrous poem.

St. Sundarar in his heavenly pre-existence was Alalasundarar. Verse 31 describes his sacred duties:

"Unto the True Ens, the Lord of Munificence,
In whose crest courses the flood of Ganga,
His service was to gather honied blooms
And weave them into garlands;
He was also the bearer of His Holy Ash."

Lord Siva willed the redemption of the world through the instrumentality of the *Tiru-th-tonda-th-tokai* and so St. Sundarar made his *avatar* here on earth. The event leading to his *avatar* is narrated thus.

As usual, St. Sundarar, one day, fared forth to the flower-garden to gather fresh flowers.

"Thither came a pair of women, passing beautiful,
With visages like unto the full moon bright
To gather flowers, rich in pollen,
For the Lord's Consort whom they served.

"When *Anintitai* of boundless glory, and *Kamalini*
Of dark and dense hair decked with a fragrant wreath,
Were gathering choice flowers from the bunches,
It happened like the grace of the Lord of gods.

"For the great thriving of the south
That indeed had wrought immense *tapas*,
He who was to incarnate thither, and hymn
The flawless *Tiru-th-tonda-th-tokai*,
Did set his mind on them both;
The loving lasses too revelled in the joy of sight.

"He gathered many many flowers -- fit for the Lord --,
That were about to bloom, and sought by the bees,
And went away; like him the pen-like lasses
Also gathered cool flowers, and hied away.

"The Primal Lord beheld him and said:
'You set your mind on the damsel-pair;
Be born in the southern realm;
Be linked with them in loving joy, and then return.'"

From this we learn that even peccadilloes are not suffered in a soil that is holy and sacrosanct. An entirely different lesson is also taught by this episode. It can be best described in the words of Kahlil Gibran: "No longing remains unfulfilled." However Alalasundarar's desire would not meet with fulfilment in Holy Kailas where Siva burnt to ashes the God of Love, but only on earth. So, from *Siva-loka*

"..... where those immortal shapes
Of bright aerial spirits live insphered
In regions mild of calm and serene air"

Alalasundarar had to come down to "this dim spot which men call Earth." His coming, however, was a blessing in disguise. It was divinely purposive. Even his wish was willed by Siva for the benefit of mankind. He was to author the hymn of hymns -- *Tiru-th-tonda-th-tokai*. As already observed, it is on this the *Periya Puranam* is structured. Lord Siva who helped St. Sundarar with the first line to compose his hymn, also helped St. Sekkizhar with the opening words of the first stanza of the *Periya Puranam*. Our saint says:

"The great nature of Nayanmar's service to God
Is indeed incomprehensible; you lack clarity;
How can you dare attempt this?"
Thus confronted, we but submit
That it is the flawless Logos,
The unbodied celestial voice
That has initiated us in this service."

It is thus our saint celebrates the divine sanction with which he was blessed. The words of the Lord: *Ulaku elam* invested our saint with a competency to indite the theandric *puranam*. Nambi-Andar-Nambi, a divinely inspired

Atiyar produced an enlarged version of the *Tiru-th-tonda-th-tokai,* in anaphoretic verse and this poem called the *Tiru-th-tondar-Tiruvantati* is also a source-work for our poet-saint. St. Sekkizhar says:

"Our Lord Nambi-Andar-Nambi, with all his heart,
Adored in verse the devotees hailed by
The divinely true decad; with his work too
As our guide, we compose this work, unflawed." - 48

For the *Periya Puranam*, these two poems are the main source. St. Sundarar's poem is the primary source; that of St. Nambi-Andar-Nambi's is the secondary. Besides these there are other sources which are ancillary. The Tamil *Tirumurais*, in particular the *Tevaram* and the eleventh *Tirumurai*, have provided invaluable material for our saint. Besides these, St. Sekkizhar -- a myriad-minded scholar of extraordinary erudition --, appears to have made use of inscriptions, copper-plates, *sthala puranams*, iconography, epigraphy, usages and customs of ancient temples, tradition etc. His thorough knowledge of the *Srutis*, the *Smritis*, the *Agamas* and the *Puranas* had stood him in great stead. The pious and the holy believe that he had had help extended to him by Siva Himself. A careful perusal of this opus will reveal that this *Puranam* differs from most others in that the facts narrated here are verifiable and indeed are verified to be true. Researches in the fields of archaeology and epigraphy are throwing up more and more materials which confirm the facts recorded in the *Periya Puranam*.

In this connection we desire to place before the reader the poignant observations of Monsieur Francois Gros, a polymath in the true sense of the word. In his enlightening article entitled: Towards Reading The *Tevaram* he says: " .... it should be recognized that this work (the *Periya Puranam)* is an exceptional memorial. The erudition of its multiple facets reaches the highest standard of Indian scholarship: an awesome recollection of texts, of puranic stories and of anecdotes, a feeling for narrative, characters and situation and all this in the service of a noble cause. Sekkizhar's strength lies in his use of the hymns (of the *Tevaram)* as the warp whilst he remains faithful to them, literally and in terms of the prosody. Thus the shuttle may run between the various threads, loaded in turn with history, legend, mythology or pious tall stories. At the end the most diverse woof is inextricably interwoven with higher truth and with the authority of the hymns themselves. Sekkizhar is entirely incorporated into the *Tevaram* and nobody after him has been able to read it except through him." Monsieur Gros has analysed the creative steps of St. Sekkizhar and his manner of integrating the hagiographic tradition into existing literary work apropos the life of Karaikkal Ammaiyar, published with a translation by Julien Vinson in Chants devotionnels tamouls of Karaikkal Ammaiyar which appeared in 1982.

The Age of the Nayanmar

According to Dr. M. Rajamanikkam, St. Sundarar flourished approxi-

mately between 840 A.D. and 865 A.D. The Kollam Era rife in Kerala, it is said, commences from the date of the ascension of Ceraman Perumal Nayanar to Kailas. This Era commences from 825 A.D. Tradition affirms that St. Sundarar lived for only eighteen years in this world. The *Periya Puranam* informs us that the ascension of St. Sundarar and St. Ceraman Peruman was on the same day. The illation, therefore; is that St. Sundarar flourished between 807 A.D and 825 A.D.

Dr. M.A.Dorai Rangaswamy says: "In general, one may conclude that he (St. Sundarar) was born during the closing years of the seventh century to live through the first quarter of the eight century." *(The Religion and Philosophy of Tevaram*, Book 1, p. 152).

T.A.Gopinath Rao was of the opinion that St. Sundarar's period was the middle part of the ninth century.

Prof. K.Vellaivaranan in his *Panniru Tirumurai Varalaru*, Part-1, says that Kadavarkon Kazhal Singhan, the contemporary of St. Sundarar, was none other than Raja Simha Pallava and that St. Sundarar lived toward the close of the seventh century and the beginning of the eighth century. We are in humble agreement with the opinion expressed by Prof. K.Vellaivaranan.

Thirteen are the contemporaries of St. Sundarar, they being:

1. Satayanar (the father of St. Sundarar)
2. Isai Gnaniyar (the mother of St. Sundarar)
3. Yeyarkon Kalikkamar,
4. Manakkanjarar (the father-in-law of Yeyarkon Kalikkamar),
5. Viran Mindar,
6. Katavarkon Kazhal Singhar,
7. Poosalar,
8. Ceru-th-thunai,
9. Ceraman Peruman,
10. Kotpuli,
11. Perumizhalai-k-Kurumpar,

12. Narasinga Munaiyaraiyar and

13. Somasi Marar.

These Nayanmar should have flourished toward the end of the seventh century and the beginning of the eighth century.

The Age of St. Tirugnanasambandhar

Datation in this connection has its inevitable nexus to the capture of Vatapi in 642 A.D., by Narasimha Pallavan. The Pallava commander-in-chief during this time was Paranjyoti and the victory is attributed to his prowess. After the war, Paranjyoti, though a young bachelor and very active, was spared from military service as the king came to know that his general was a great *Siva-bhakta*. Paranjyoti is none other than Sirutthondar, the saint. St. Tirugnanasambandhar, in his decad on Tiru-ch-Chenkattankudi, hails Sirutthondar. In this decad of eleven stanzas, the tenth stanza is not extant. Sirutthondar is hailed in all the available stanzas of this hymn. He is referred to as one endowed with rocky shoulders (Kannavil tholl), as one who adheres strictly to the religious discipline (Sittan), as one who wears a melliferous garland (Tenamartar), as one steeped in glory (Seerulam), as one whose shoulders are brimming with martial valour (Seruvati tholl), as one of lofty glory (Seeralan), as one of fadeless greatness (Sirappulavan), and as one whose chest is besmeared with the holy ash (Neeranimarpan). After his retirement Sirutthondar became a full-time servitor of Siva and His devotees.

St. Sambandhar refers to Ninra-ceer-Nedumaran, a Pandya King who was brought back to the fold of Saivism by the boy-saint. This Pandya is referred to as Mara Varman Arikesari who is said to have flourished between 640 A.D. and 680 A.D.

Prof. K.Vellaivaranan in his excellent work referred to supra, gives cogent and convincing reasons for his conclusion that St. Tirugnanasambandhar should have made his *avatar* in 638 A.D. Tradition has it that this saint lived for sixteen years. St. Sekkizhar confirms this fact. The *Periya Puranam* says that St. Sambandhar was sixteen years old when he brought back to life Poompavai. *Punniya-p-pathinaru Aandu* (the pious and holy sixteenth year) are the words of our saint-poet. After the resurrection of Poompavai, St. Sambandhar returned to his home-town and got married within a few days. His ascension took place on the very day of his wedding. From these facts we can infer that St. Tirugnanasambandhar flourished between 638 A.D. and 654 A.D.

St. Tirunavukkarasar, more famously known as Appar, was a senior contemporary of the boy-saint. Tradition affirms that St. Appar lived for eightyone years. This is also well-borne out by the *Periya Puranam*. He

was about sixtyfive years old when he called on the child-saint who was then seven years old.

Mahendravarman I (580 A.D. to 630 A.D.) was a contemporary of St. Appar. It was this king who was reconverted to Saivism by St. Appar. St. Appar lived during the reign of Narasimhavarma Pallava also. It is not known when St. Appar had his ascension. It should have taken place a few months prior to that of St. Sambandhar's. The absence of St. Appar at the wedding of St. Sambandhar is significant. Obviously, he was not alive then.

From these data we can infer that St. Appar flourished between 573 A.D. and 654 A.D.

The contemporaries of St. Appar and St. Sambandhar were:

1. St. Appoothi Adikal,

2. St. Muruka Nayanar,

3. St. Sirutthondar,

4. St. Neelanakkar,

5. St. Kulacchirayar,

6. St. Nedu Maran,

7. St. Mangkayarkkarasi,

8. St. Kungkuliya-k-Kalayar and

9. St. Tiru Nilakanta Yazhppanar.

We cannot, with any certitude, date the times of the other Nayanmar. St. Tirumoolar is said to have flourished for over three millennia. The believers of the Bible will not disbelieve this, for the Bible tells us that Adam lived for 930 years. In this context, it is good to remember that India has a very very hoary past. It is heartening to note that the science of 'Prehistoric Archaeology' is making stupendous strides in modern times and that a fresh orientation is in the offing. According to Sri Ponnambalam Ramanathan, "our view of the Past, and of the course of generations of men, of the works of God and men of God, of rulers and heroes, together with their sayings and doings, extend not to a few hundred years before Christ Jesus, but to centuries of millenniums." (The *Ramayana*, by Lady Ramanathan, Introduction, p. x).

The word *Purana* stands for ancientness as well as perfection or completeness. Even a myth is not without some significance. The word myth is derived from *mythos* meaning word of mouth or tradition. The word fable is derived from the Latin word *fabula* which is derived from fari, meaning to speak. Legend is truly a story of remote antiquity. It is derived from the Latin word *legenda* which is again derived from *legere*, meaning to read. In ancient times, ideas were transmitted only by word of mouth. This then accounts for the greatness of oral tradition. A part of the *Periya Puranam* is to be understood in the light of tradition too. *Sthala Puranas* contain, to an extent, the tradition, though in a distorted form. Therefore, the supplementary information, found in some of the *Sthala Puranas*, touching a few episodes of the *Periya Puranam*, is worth further investigation and analysis.

Suddha-Yogis

Stanza 15, Tirumalai-ch-Cirappu makes a pointed reference to Suddha-Yogis. These are saints that adhered to the Suddha-Marga which is *Gnana-Marga*. Of them Dr. V.V.Ramana Sastri observes as follows: "But the time-honoured assemblage designated the Ashtadasa Siddhas, comprising eighteen Mahesvara Siddhas of the Suddha-marga, is made up for the most part of people of *South Indian* origin, though it has also been customary loosely to envisage under the same designation any eighteen individuals, as suits one's fancy or interest, from out of a mixed congeries of about sixty influential Siddhas of diverse vogue, discipline and domicile. The four classical South Indian apostles of *Agamic Saivism*, forming a class by themselves by reason of their outstanding spiritual powers and graces, to wit, Manikka-vachaka, Vagisa (Appar), Gnanasambandha, and Sundara, as well as the bulk of the reputed *Saivagamic* saints, canonized or otherwise, in the Tamil districts and their environs, like Auvai, Mular, Ahappey, Pambatti, Kaduvali, Idaikkadar, Karuvurar, Siralan, Kumaradevar, Mutthutandavar, Venkadar, Arunagiri, Bhadragiriyar, Sivavakyar, and Tirumaligaittevar, belong to the glorious tradition of the *Suddha-marga* of the *Gnana Siddhas* and are known to have passed over by simple translation, untouched by corporeal death. The poet Tayumanavar is not tired of singing the praises of these Gnana *Siddhas* and their spiritual worth." (*The Cultural Heritage of India*, Vol. IV, pp. 305-06). Taking into consideration such palpable facts as somatic athanasy, transfiguration and ascension, the conclusion that is ineluctable, is that the Grand Four of Tamil Saivism are siddhas of the *Suddha-Marga*. In this context, the reader will do well to consult the *Siddhagama*, the *Sukshmagama*, the *Viragama* and the *Vatulagama*.

The South is the Greatest

The *Periya Puranam* has its beginning and end in the holy Kailas. Alalasundarar was a personal attendant of Lord Siva. St. Appar was Vagisa in his heavenly pre-existence. He has witnessed in person the service of Alalasundarar to Lord Siva. One of the duties of St. Sundarar was to fan the

person of Lord Siva with a pair of chowries. "Sundaranai-th-thunaik Kavari Veesak Kondar" are the words of St. Appar (6-96-5). The one little slip of St. Sundarar which perhaps lasted for less than a second, had caused his expulsion from *Siva-loka*. This, however, proved to be a great blessing for mankind. He was away from *Siva-loka* for eighteen years, and when he returned, he literally left a blazing trail. As he returned, mantled in great resplendence, riding the white divine tusker, St. Upamanyu of boundless askesis, paid obeisance to him. The myriad Suddha-yogis who stood encircling St. Upamanyu, were taken aback by his act. This saint adored none but Siva and his act therefore nonplussed them. It is St. Upamanyu who narrated first the life of Nambi Aroorar to the Suddha-yogis. During his narration he descanted on the glories of the south. The south is a realm of exceeding holiness. St. Upamanyu calls it *"Desam ellam vilangkiya then tisai."* He refers to a pentad of hoary shrines, they being Puliyoor (Chidambaram), Tiruvaroor, Kanchipuram, Tiruvaiyaru and Tonipuram (Seerkazhi). Of these, Tiruvaiyaru which is very close to us, is of especial significance. It was here Lord Nandi -- the Chamberlain of Lord Siva --, was born. Even as the mother of Tirugnanasambandhar adored her son, Silada Muni, the father of Lord Nandi adored him (*Vide Lingapurana*, Chapter 42). The *Lingapurana* hails Nandi as "a second Sankara," a title vouchsafed to none else. Tiruvaiyaru is known as *Panchanada* -- the place of five streams, they being *Jatodaka*, *Trisrotas*, *Vrshadhvani*, *Svarnodaka* and *Jambunadi*. On either bank of the river Cauvery are hundreds of *Sivalayas*. The south is therefore the greatest.

There are 275 shrines of Siva which are hailed as the *Tevaram*-Shrines. These are shrines for which the *Tevaram*-decads are available. There are as many as 237 other shrines which are found mentioned in the *Tevaram*, though none of these can claim an entire decad for itself. These are known as the *Tevara-Vaippu-th-thalangkal*. The hymnodists, according to Prof. A.K.Ramanujan "literally sang places into existence." According to Joseph B.Schwartzberg, these are "Religious and Cultural Sites."

Shrines and their Social Significance

Religion apart, shrines are places by which societies ever stood to gain. We extract hereinbelow part of a footnote furnished by Prof. A.K.Ramanujan (*Hymns for the Drowning*, p. 107). "The temples were just as "utilitarian" as dams and canals. "Public works like the latter were often administered under the auspices of temples from the middle Pallava period through at least the Vijayanagar period." Nicholas B. Dirks, "Political Authority and Structural Change in Early South Indian History," pp. 145-46. For new thinking about South Indian Temples, see Burton Stein, ed., "Special Number on South Indian Temples." ..... Temples are "the most sensitive institution registering changes ..... especially of dominance patterns"; they are witnesses to the South Indian conception that "human leaders (kings both large and small ....), and the deities installed in temples, *share* sovereignty." South

Indian "political communities are *communities of worship* ...... The temple is the cultural and ideological context in which men and resources can be controlled, authority contested, and kingship revitalized" (Stein, p. 7)."

It must be borne in mind, that at a time when hurricanes swept the country, it is these temples -- in particular those at Tirumaraikkadu and Rameshwaram --, that offered refuge to the homeless destitutes.

Inscriptions inform us that temples have served as academies, hospitals, libraries, theatres and what not. Architecture and sculpture flourished thanks to the temples. Their role in society is of utmost importance.

The true meaning of Temple

It is well known that it is the *Agamas* which inculcate the art of housing THAT which is the Home-of-All -- sentient as well as insentient. The very idea of providing for the Provider is at once sublime and lofty. What is more, it is daring. Whence did man learn to dare? It is the Lord, we are convinced, who taught man to dare, and his daring, we daresay, is but an inspired form of humility.

The sculptor who sculpts an icon that is to be installed in a temple, is not thought to be its creator. He is deemed to be its creature. Phenomenal weights and measures get reversed in their values in the context that is divine. What is more, the very mind-defying acts are undertaken by the mind of man, so that he may eventually transcend the mind itself.

What may the basic constituents of the House of God be? An idol, a tree and a pool. These three are sufficient. Well, was this even so, during the Vedic period? As we tread a different ground here, let us seek the answer to this question from Louis Renon, a competent research scholar. He says: "It must be remembered that there were no temples at the Vedic period: 'the sacrifice takes place within the officiants themselves' says one of the Brahmanas. The term *ayatana*, which later came to mean 'sanctuary', merely designates the ordinary domestic hearth in Vedic times. The temple cult of the classical period must have grown out of the domestic cult. Sacrifice took place on a specially prepared piece of ground, but the same spot was not necessarily used again for subsequent ceremonies. There was no building other than temporary huts." (*The Destiny of the Veda in India*).

Obviously the temple does not appear to be an outcome of the Vedic way of life. Neither was it, we hasten to add, against its coming into being. It is the *Agamas*, which the Lord in his infinite mercy, gave us, gave us the temples.

The Light which is *para* is symbolised by the icon and the life which

is *apara* is symbolised by water as well as tree. Under the Tree of Life, is installed the Life of lives. The water of life cleanses the pilgrim - visitor and makes him fit to reach the Life of lives which has deigned to rest under the shade of life.

Later additaments -- court, sub-shrines, *gopuras*, walls etc. --, completed the picture and present the achievement as a grand, sublime and uniquely harmonious whole. So, the temple, in a town or a city, is a part of it, and yet it stands apart. The temple and the town represent two different worlds which are operating at two different levels in a seemingly integrated geographical whole.

By frequently and usefully commuting between the temple and the town, man eventually qualifies himself to become a permanent citizen in the city of God. It is therefore the temple which controls, or in the nature of things, should control the town. The true prosperity of the town is considered to be commensurate with its intensity or the lack thereof, of its adherence to the control of the temple. *Selvam uyarkinra Selvar vazh Tillai-Ch-Chitrambalam* (Tillai where the opulent thrive in ever-increasing foison and uberty) are words surcharged with spiritual opulence. If however the town should begin to control the temple, the raison d' etre of the temple will begin to cease. '*Cessante rationo legis cessat lex ipsa.*' Again, 'Cessante *causa, cessat et effectus.*'

From strife to sanctuary: this truly marks the journey's end. Sooner or later, man begins his true journey. His journey eventually takes him into the self, and this is a movement away from stagnation and periphery into what is called the centre or core of dynamism. The earlier hustle and bustle is nothing but stagnation. The spiritual gain which is peace and rest, is truly wondrous dynamism. It is a seeking of the stationed dynamism from restless and useless mobility. It is the discovery of bliss by one's own self in one's own self which is now oned with the self of selves.

The normal person, no doubt, is more concerned with *bhukti* (reward) than *mukti* (bliss of deliverance). It is here Saivism insists that both *bhukti* and *mukti* are attainable through *bhakti* (devotion). St. Sundarar's Tiru-p-Pukalur *Tevaram* affirms thus:

"Here and now you will be clothed and fed;
Your troubles, in sooth, will be ended;
In the life to be, you will reign in the *Siva-loka*
And this admits of no doubt at all."

Bhakti, according to Indira Viswanathan Peterson, is "passionate and total devotion" to one's God. (Poems to Siva, p. 9). Indeed it is a rarity of rarities. It is hard to come by. It is devotional love at its plenitude. *Bhakti* alone is a fit offering unto the deity. *Bhakti* is the stuff out of which the temple

of God is wrought. The pilgrim's progress is from *eros* which is "the hot and unendurable desire" to *storge* which is family affection, and from *storge* to *philia* which is physical and more than physical love, and again from *philia* to *agape* which is "unconquerable benevolence, invincible goodwill." The love that wells up in the heart of an *atiyar* is a universal love; a sacrificial love; a saving and sanctifying love; a sustaining and strengthening love; an inseparable and ineluctable love; a rewarding and chastening love. It is untainted by *mismos* (hatred). It is awful and grand, lofty and noble, sublime and beautiful, elevating and edifying, pure and ambrosial, transcending and transmuting, sincere, innocent, generous, forbearing, forgiving and is full of the peace that surpasseth understanding. When the human heart is made pure by this love, it becomes the House of God.

Milton the *Ma Muni* affirmed thus:

> "And chiefly thou, O Spirit, that dost prefer
> Before all temples th' upright heart and pure."

Such a heart is a holy cave and the dweller therein is *Iswara*. It is the *Chitt-para-Vyomam*. And into this God enters to abide thither willingly for ever. *En ulame pukunta athanal* (As he has entered into my heart/self) are the significant words of St. Tirugnanasambandhar. These celebrate an *anubuti*, a mystic experience. In the human body, verily a tabernacle of flesh, is situate the *Garbhagraha*, the adytum, which is the human heart. Within this flourishes the Ens entitum. According to Vedanta *Sutra* (1,3,15) the Chitrambalam -- the small ether, is the *gati*, the path and origin of everything.

Chandogya upanishad affirms thus: "As large as is this *Akasa* so large is that *Akasa* in the heart. Both heaven and earth are contained within it; both fire and air, both the sun and the moon, the lightning and the stars, and whatever there is in this world, and also what is not, -- all that is contained within it." (Ch. Up. VIII, 1, 3).

In her article: "From Guha to *Akasa*," Bettina Baumer says: "The cavity of the living being," its heart, is thus the *place* where the Self or God is present....." (Ellora Caves, p. 65). This heart is truly a spiritual organ. The *Akasa* which pervades it is called *daharakasa*, also called *Brahmapura*. It is this *Brahmapuram* which is celebrated in the very first decad of the child-poet St. Tirugnanasambandhar. The symbol of the *pura(m)*, according to Bettina Baumer, reminds us of the "interior castle" of Teresa of Avila. It is the house of God.

The concept of a temple is admirably sized up by Stella Kramrisch thus: "The temple is the concrete shape *(murti)* of the Essence: as such it is the residence and vesture of God. The masonry is the sheath *(Kosha)* and body. The temple is the monument of manifestation. The devotee who

comes to the temple, to look at it, does so as a *seer*, not as a spectator" (*The Hindu Temple*, Vol. 1, p. 165).

Tirumalai

Tirumalai is Mt. Kailas, the abode of Lord Siva. It is ethereal. Its material counterpart -- Kayilai (Mt. Kailas) of the Himalayas --, is held in great veneration. It is in the north, and therefore the devotee sits facing north when he does his *pooja* to Lord Siva. When one smears oneself with the holy ash, one must face this direction. The God of the Saivites does abide in this holy mountain.

It is well-known that the Jews have a similar faith. Mount Horeb -- "the Mountain of the Glowing Sun" --, appears in the Book of Exodus as the sacred seat of Jehova. Its lower part, according to some, is Mount Sinai.

What Mt. Horeb is to the Jew, Mt. Kailas is to the Saivite. It is reported in the Maha Bharata that Vishnu performed *tapas* in this mount to please Lord Siva (*Adi Parva*, Chapter 222). Such is its greatness.

The Country

The mountain that is celebrated in the Periya Puranam is Mt. Kailas and the country, the Chola land, made fertile by the Cauvery. This river is likened to the melting kindness of Goddess Uma Herself. *Aludaiya Nayaki ulnekizh karunaiyin ozhukkam ponrathe* are the words of our saint-poet. No wonder, the land fed by this river, fosters the Vedas, the *yagas*, the rituals, the *yoga* and the *tapas*. This is the country of the Cholas, and King Anapayan -- the patron of St. Sekkizhar --, is of this dynasty.

The City

The city of the *Periya Puranam* is Tiruvarur. The age of the shrine at Tiruvarur is beyond reckoning. The decad of St. Appar beginning with the words: *Oruvanai ulakettha ninra naalo* attests to its ancientness. According to S. Ponnusamy (Sri Thyagaraja Temple -- Thiruvarur - 1972), the main deity is Thyagaraja. The shrine of this Deity and that of Valmikanatha form a double shrine and the temple complex occupies an area of about nineteen acres. The temple known as Tiruvarur-Araneri is also situate here. Besides this, numerous shrines are situate here. Three spacious *prakaras* circle the temple known as *Poongkoil*. Achalesvaram, Atakesvaram, Anandesvaram, Siddhisvaram, the shrines of Nilothpalambal and Kamalambal etc., form part of the temple.

Many are the *mantapams* of this temple. The Devasiriyan -- the *mantapam* par excellence and the Sabhapati *mantapam* are of unique importance.

Detailed information about *Poongkoil* is found mentioned in Kudavayil Balasubramanian's scholarly work: "Tiruvarur-th-Tirukkoyil " (1988) and Dean Shulman's *Tamil Temple Myths.*

King Manu was one of its ancient kings. He is not to be confused with Manu -- the law-giver. According to our Saint-poet, his patron Anapayan is a descendant of King Manu. His famous belfry -- the symbol of his justness and justice --, the driving of his chariot over the body of his only son to avenge his son's killing of a calf, are not parts of legends but of history. In *The Mahavamsa* translated by Wilhelm Geiger, at page 153 it is recorded thus:

"A Damila of noble descent, named ELARA, who came hither from the Cola-country to seize on the kingdom, ruled when he had overpowered king Asela, forty-four years, with even justice toward friend and foe, on occasions of disputes at law.

"At the head of his bed he had a bell hung up with a long rope so that those who desired a judgement at law might ring it. The king had only one son and one daughter. When once the son of the ruler was going in a car to the Tissa-tank, he killed unintentionally a young calf lying on the road with the mother cow, by driving the wheel over its neck. The cow came and dragged at the bell in bitterness of heart; and the king caused his son's head to be severed (from his body) with the same wheel."

(We are grateful to Tiru V.S.Ramalingam for bringing to our notice this passage.)

The Damila (Tamilian) referred to above is king Manu. He was a ruler of the Chola country. He had only one son. This son drove over the neck of a calf unintentionally. Embittered by the loss of its calf (puttasokena kupitacitta) the cow dragged at the bell. Justice was done.

Even in the West, the Bell-Tower had helped men and animals to get justice. The poem entitled: "The Bell of Atri" by Longfellow, is in point.

At Atri in Abruzzo, a small town
Of ancient Roman date, but scant renown,
The Re Giovanni now known to fame,
Had a great bell hung in the market-place
And, with the blast of trumpets loud and long,
Made proclamation, that whenever wrong
Was done to any man, he should but ring
The great bell in the square, and he, the King,
Would cause the Syndic to decide thereon.
Such was the proclamation of King John.
How swift the happy days in Atri sped,

What wrongs were sighted, need not here be said;
Suffice it that, as all things must decay,
The hempen rope at length was worn away,
Unravelled at the end, and, strand by strand,
Loosened and wasted in the ringer's hand,
Till one, who noted this in passing by,
Mended the rope with braids of briony,
So that the leaves and tendrils of the vine
Hung like a votive garland at a shrine.
By chance it happened that in Atri dwelt
A knight, with spur on heel and sword in belt,
Who loved his hounds and horses, and all sports
Loved, or had loved them; for at last, grown old,
His only passion was the love of gold.
He sold his horses, sold his hawks and hounds,
Rented his vineyards and his garden-grounds,
Kept but one steed, his favourite steed of all,
To starve and shiver in a naked stall,
And day by day sat brooding in his chair,
Devising plans how best to hoard and spare.
At length he said: "What is the use or need
To keep at my own cost this lazy steed,
Eating his head off in my stables here,
When rents are low and provender is dear?
Let him go feed upon the public ways;
I want him only for the holidays."
So the old steed was turned into the heat
Of the long, lonely, silent, shadeless street,
And wandered in suburban lanes forlorn,
Barked at by dogs, and torn by briar and thorn.
One afternoon, as in that sultry clime
It is the custom in the summer time,
With bolted doors and window-shutters closed,
The inhabitants of Atri slept or dozed;
When suddenly upon their senses fell
The loud alarum of the accusing bell!
The Syndic started from his deep repose,
Turned on his couch, and listened, and then rose
And donned his robes, and with reluctant pace
Went panting forth into the market-place,
Where the great bell upon its cross-beam swung,
Reiterating with persistent tongue,
In half-articulate jargon, the old song:
'Someone hath done a wrong, hath done a wrong.'
But ere he reached the belfry's light arcade,
He saw, or thought he saw, beneath its shade,

No shape of human form of woman born,
But a poor steed, dejected and forlorn,
Who with uplifted head and eager eye
Was tugging at the vines of briony.
'Domeneddio!' cried the Syndic straight,
'This is the Knight of Atri's steed of state!
He calls for justice, being sore distressed,
And pleads his cause as loudly as the best.'
Meanwhile from street and lane a noisy crowd
Had rolled together like a summer cloud,
And told the story of the wretched beast
In five-and-twenty different ways at least,
With much gesticulation and appeal
To heathen gods, in their excessive zeal.
The knight was called and questioned; in reply
Did not confess the fact, did not deny;
Treated the matter as a pleasant jest,
And set at naught the Syndic and the rest,
Maintaining in an angry undertone,
That he should do what pleased him with his own.
And thereupon the Syndic gravely read
The proclamation of the King; then said:
"Pride goeth on horseback grand and gay,
But cometh back on foot, and begs its way;
Fame is the fragrance of heroic deeds
Of flowers of chivalry, and not of weeds!
These are familiar proverbs; but I fear
They never yet have reached your knightly ear.
What fair renown, what honour, what repute
Can come to you from starving the poor brute?
He who serves well and speaks not, merits more
Than they who clamour loudest at the door.
Therefore the law decreed that as this steed
Served you in youth, henceforth you shall take heed
To comfort his old age, and to provide
Shelter in stall, and food and field beside."
The knight withdrew abashed; the people all
Led home the steed in triumph to his stall.
The King heard and approved, and laughed in glee,
And cried aloud: "Right well it pleaseth me!
Church-bells at best but ring us to the door;
But go not into the mass; my bell doth more:
It cometh into court and pleads the cause
Of creatures dumb and unknown to the laws;
And this shall make, in every Christian clime,
The Bell of Atri famous for all time.

King Manu, coming to know of the killing of a calf, initially orders one of his ministers to drive the car over his son's body. The minister would not say 'no' to the king. Neither would he drive the car as commanded. To escape from the sin of disobedience, he chose to commit self-murder. This incident is not without its parallel. Robert Graves, the author of *King Jesus*, depicts Judas as a great friend of Jesus. When Jesus appointed Judas as his executioner, he could not say 'no' to him. He went to Nicodemon and said: ".... He has appointed me his executioner. Yet I cannot kill my dearest friend; I cannot kill the man whom John anointed: rather, I would take my own life, as the armour-bearer did on Mount Gilboa when ordered by king Saul to run him through."

Expounding Raja Dharma, this is what King Manu tells his ministers:

"Is not the ruler of a realm that guards its lives
Duty-bound to rid his subjects of the fivefold fear --
Causing hindrance and stemming from himself,
His men in power, harmful hostility of foes,
Thieves and wild animals --, and thus protect Dharma."

The *sloka* quoted as foot-note at page 58, Vol. III of P.V.Kane's *History of Dharmasastra* runs thus:

Aayuktakebhyas chorebhya:
Parebhyo raja vallabhath!
Pritivipati lobaccha
Prajanam panchata bhayam!!

This verse is from Kamandaka and it says that the subjects require protection against the king's officers, thieves, enemies of the king, royal favourites and the greed of the king himself.

To die fighting for the protection of cows and Brahmanas is specially commended by *Dharma Sastras* (Ibid). Rendering of justice to a cow, it is inferable, is equally commendable. In the teeth of formidable opposition, King Manu acted.

Doris Srinivasan, the authoress of "Concept of Cow In the Rig Veda" says: "The Aryans at the time of the Rig Veda followed a rural type of existence which was based upon a pastoral and agricultural economy." At page 13 of her work she observes: "The high value placed upon the cow resulted from the many uses she served."

At page 45, she says: "In the *Rig Veda*, pious devotion or human longing is evoked by the image of the cow with her calf. This image expresses maternal affection; the cow, tender, abounding in milk and protective of its young, is the embodiment of maternal energy."

The milch-cow is ever deemed divine. To be teeming with milk is conceptualized in the Rig Veda as 'unbridled generosity'. Liberality is the true characteristic of the milch-cow. Andal -- the Nacchiyar, calls cows patrons (Vallal).

Cows were corban in the days of the *Rig Veda*. The *Rig Veda* says: "They cast themselves to the gods." (10.169.3)

Before concluding the episode of King Manu, St. Sekkizhar strikes the following note:

"Gone was the sorrow of the cow whose udder swelled
As the calf sucked in joy its sweet milk
Which overflowed and drenched the earth." - 133.

In the context we affirm thus: "Uberty, thy name is cow!"

The Holy Company

When one thinks of the Holy company of God's servitors, one recalls to one's mind the famous phrase of Vergil's: Pietatis imago (the image of devotion). A devotee is devotion on two legs. Once again we recall to our mind the dictum of Vergil's: "Vicit iter durum pietas" (Devotion has mastered the hard way). Of them St. Sekkizhar says:

"Pure are they inly too, like the holy ashes they wear;
By their lustre they make all the directions radiant;
Their glory is indeed ineffable."

These are truly flawless hills of piety. True devotion is sundering of all attachments and clinging only to the deity. This is, as Friedhelm Hardy says: "the ananyabhakti and the *karmasamarpana* of the Gita. "(Viraha-Bhakti, p. 328). Robert Graves' King Jesus affirms: "A prophet has no father, mother nor brothers except his fellow-prophets." There is nothing, either in this world or in the other, that is greater than the Holy Company.

"They are the ever-blest who have beyonded
Both prosperity and adversity;
Ruddy gold or pot-sherds, they alike ignore;
Adoration of the Lord in love is their sole goal;
They seek not even Moksha;
Such is their firmness of purpose." - 143.

The *Puranam* of Divine Intercession

This part of the *Periya Puranam* clearly establishes that St. Sekkizhar was a great legal luminary. The chief minister of King Anapayan was fami-

liar with the labyrinthine lanes and by-lanes of Law and legal procedure. Dealing with this subject, we wrote an article entitled: "A Narration of In re: *Perumuni* alias *Pitthan of Vennainalloor*" about fifteen years ago and it is reproduced hereunder.

Sundaramoorthy Nayanar, the Lord's own companion is to wed the daughter of Satankavi Sivacharya. Elaborate arrangements have been made for their connubium. Sundarar, the handsome lad, is appropriately clad in the ceremonial habiliments and looks majestic in *Vaidhihic* splendour. The beauteous bride is a paragon of virtues. The priests and prohits are in attendance. The wedding-guests have assembled. It is an occasion of delectation. A solemn jubilee holds the air. The auspicious rituals are about to commence.

On a sudden, a venerable ripe old Brahmin is sighted at a distance. He is bent with age. He has with him for a penang-lawyer, a bamboo stick, to walk with. He comes twaddling but he appears to be in haste. It looks as if that old age itself is on its legs, incarnate in his comely form. The venerable sage steps into the house of festivity. He does not appear to be a respecter of manners or men. In a loud voice he starts shouting: **"Hearken to me, ye all, that are here."** All eyes are riveted on him now.

The senior members of the assembly now make haste to bid him a warm welcome. With reverence due, they beseech him to declare unto them the purpose of his visit.

The old man with a twinkling of mischief in his refulgent eyes, darts his index-finger at the bridegroom, clears his throat and in a stentorian voice speaks thus: "There is betwixt us, even as of olden time, a litigious matter stemming from an agreement. Let that be resolved first, after which, you may, with your wedding-ceremony, proceed." Sundarar assures him, that his wedding shall not be, until the controversy is set at rest. Thus assured the good old man prefers his plaint, couching his case in words which flow thus: "O Brahmins, judge my cause. This is what I state. This stripling of Navaloor (Sundarar) is my slave. This in fine, is my case."

A commotion stirs the audience. "What does this old chap mean?" think some. Some are furious. Quite a good many are prone to laugh. Indeed rambunctious cachinnation is heard from a section of the audience. Sundarar is nonplussed; but he recovers well in time to have a dig at the old soul. "Extremely good indeed are the words of this Brahmin," he exclaims, unable to suppress his mirth.

"Wherefore do you laugh?" cries the old man with a voice that rumbles like thunder. "Behold this palm-leaf, the document solemn, in proof of your thralldom, executed in the days gone by, by none other than the very father of your father. Cease thy laughter."

The words of the venerable one, start reverberating in the wedding-hall. The young bridegroom has suffered an open affront in a distinguished company. His laughter vamooses. He is smarting under the pain of the old man's verbal darts, well-aimed. But he dare not provoke the new-comer any further. The new arrival is mischief-bent. It may have in stock more tricks and thingumajigs than the bridegroom can possibly hope to know. So, Sundarar counsels unto himself patience and restraint. He thinks that the droning dotard properly belongs to the asylum. He makes bold to question him thus: "We hear fròm you only the story of enslavement of a Brahmin by a Brahmin. Are you, old hand, jostled out of your senses?"

Pat comes the reply from the ancient of days. "A lunatic, let me be; or be even one possessed. Of what avail is that to you? You cannot shame me out of my purpose by your gratuitous jibes and words of evil. What *do you think of me? Do you dare to comprehend me?* Do not indulge in seemingly clever talk. O my petty slave, do as I bid thee.

Sundarar is now convinced that there is no arguing with the pachydermatous old timer and that the best way to get over this contretemps, is to challenge him to prove his impossible case. So thinking, Sundarar impatiently hurls at him his hot, urgent and sharp words: **"Show me thy leaf."** Alack a day for Sundarar, who is much mistaken. The oldster seems to know the very thoughts that flit across the mind of Sundarar. It is obvious the venerable patriarch is hell-bent on mischief. He wants to tease, harass, annoy and intimidate Sundarar as much as the latter can possibly endure. Undaunted by Sundarar's brow-beating, the ancient mariner of Manasarovas rails at him thus: "Wherefore wert thou vested with the authority to demand of me the document? O presumtuous one, do you not know that you are condemned to serve me?"

Sundarar, the cynosure of neighbouring eyes, is beside himself with anger; he can no longer put himself up with the newly-arrived menace. He will chase it out of his way. The portentuous palm-leaf will be put an end to. Even before Sundarar readies himself to action, the diabolical thought-reader has chosen to take to his heels. On goes the chasing for a pretty while. Ere long, Sundarar catches the old man, plucks the leaf from the old one and saying, "Whence came it to be estbalished, this system of enslaving Brahmins?" tears it to bits.

Little does Sundarar know that he has caught a Tartar. The old mischief-monger can turn anything and everything into account. The hasty Sundarar has given a handle to the old fighter, who, even without one, is more than a match for him. The priests and pundits are eye-witnesses to Sundarar's act of indiscretion. The plaint of the old one gains momentum, and gets enlarged into a jeremiad. "Where are you, Brahmins and Pundits? Is this the way an old man's cause is judged? Fie on ye. Hath judgement fled to brutish beasts? Who but the unrighteous and the lawless, will suffer the

prepetuation of injustice under their very nose?"

Anon the Brahmins gather near the greybeard, who renews his attack with renewed vigour. "Don't YE, my intelligent ones, see that the defendant stands self-condemned? He that hath wrenched from me my bond and destroyed it, is himself the living proof of my case."

Sundarar now feels that his rash hand has in an evil hour, plucked and torn the document. He feels further that the plot (thickens. He is sure that his opponent is no ordinary being. He is greatly perplexed. Even in his perplexity he is conscious of the fact that he is pitted against a stalwart litigant. Addressing the Brahmins he says: "Look, this one seems to be a veteran litigant, well-versed in the subtle ways of barratry and champerty" *(Palaiya Manradi Polum).*[1] He has already gathered from the old tenacious fighter that the latter hails from Thiruvennainalloor. The initial stages of the litigation have not been a good augury. A change of forum may improve the situation and better his plight. So, Sundarar decides to have the matter agitated in Thiruvennainalloor where the cause of action has arisen by reason of the execution of the alleged agreement.[2] Moreover the forum at Thiruvennainalloor is also vested with territorial jurisdiction.

The old man who already looks triumphant, consents to a transfer of the case[3] to Thiruvennainalloor Tribunal. With palpable rejoicing he says: "Destruction of a document by the defendant, in the context of the present case, cannot advance the case of the defendant. What he has torn, is after all a copy of the document *(Pati Oolai).*[4] The original *(Moola Oolai)*[5] is yet in my safe custody. There in the Tribunal of Brahmins, I will produce it and prove the contract of slavery, beyond question or cavil."

The scene shifts to Thiruvennainalloor. The august tribunal of the austere Brahmins is in session. The plaintiff re-presents his plaint[6] *(Muraippadu).* The case has been opened.[7] The judges are presented with a bird's eye view of the case by the old court-bird.

The chief of the Tribunal projects a preliminary objection regarding the maintainability of the case.[8] He states that enslavement of a Brahmin by a Brahmin is repugnant to custom.

The plaintiff is one who will not be bamboozled by any forensic buffeting. He counters the objection raised, with his technical yet tenable reply, when he states that his case is not founded on custom or common law rights but on agreement enforceable at law *(Vanthavaru Isaive Andro Valakku).*[9]

The Tribunal accepts and upholds the argument of the plaintiff. The case proceeds. Even as the plaintiff is questioned, the defendant is questioned by the judges. They ask him as to why he tore off the bond. Sundarar addresses the Tribunal: "Your Honour, well-versed in the canons of law!" *(Anaitthu Nool Unarntheer)!* It needs no proof as what I am to urge is a fact of which

the Court is aware and therefore can take judicial notice *(Ariveer)*.[10]

Sundarar, after all, is not an ignorant litigant. He too appears to be well-up in law and legal procedure. Was he not one brought up by the king of the realm? He should have therefore undergone the necessary drilling in the science of the law of the realm.

Sundarar proceeds: "The strange theory of the plaintiff viz., the enslavement of Brahmins, is a myth passing beyond the ken of mind *(Manatthinal Unartharkku Etta Mayai")*.

The Tribunal itself is aware of the force of the argument of Sundarar. Therefore it rules that the onus of proof lies, and lies very heavily, on the plaintiff *(Atimai Enra Vevvurai Emmunpu Yetra Vendum)*.[11]

Assuming that the litigants before it are ordinary citizens and not professionals, the Tribunal itself indicates the three well recognized modes of proof, followed in a Court of law. They are: (i) proof by precedent of custom from time-immemorial *(Atchi)*,[12] (ii) proof by documentary evidence *(Avanam)*[13] and (iii) proof by oral testimony of eye-witnesses *(Ayalar Tham Katchi)*.[14] The Tribunal has thus indicated that it will not waste its time on matters which are not "res gestae"[15] and are merely hearsay. The parties to the action are apprised of the procedure to be followed in no uncertain terms.

The plaintiff has the right to begin.[16] Therefore he begins the case. He is aware of the preciousness of Court's time. Therefore, without any ado, he plunges in medias res with a view to clinch the issue. He straightaway informs the Court: "The bond torn by the defendant in unwarranted wrath, is but a copy *(Mootchiyir Kilittha Oolai Pati Oolai)*. I have preserved the original *(Moola Oolai)* for production in this Hon'ble Court *(Matchiyir Katta Vaitthen)*. The plaintiff is thus ready to adduce before the Court the original document thus affording evidence direct or primary as well as documentary.

The suit document which has been well preserved in an envelope, is then handed over to the clerk of the Crown, *(Karanatthan)*,[17] who receives it reverentially. He takes it out of the cover where it is kept rolled up. He unrolls the scroll and on examination finds it to be an ancient document *(Thonmai Nokki)*[18] and then reads it aloud: "I, Arooran, (Hindu) Brahmin, Adi Saiva, of Navaloor do hereby execute this deed" *(Arumarai Naval Athisaivan Arooran Ceikai)* unto *Perumuni* of Vennainalloor, alias *Pitthan*", *(Perumuni Vennai Naloor Pitthanukku)* "that I and my legal representatives" *(Yanum Enpal Varumurai Marapulorum)* "do hereby bind ourselves hereafter for generations to come to render perpetual service tantamount to slavery (to the said *Perumuni* alias *Pitthan*) *(Valitthondu Ceitharkku)* "by means

of this bond of which I am the scribe, with consent full and free (i.e. in accord with mind and deed)" *(Oolai Irumaiyal Ezhuthi Nernthen)*; "in witness whereof I have set my signature" *(Itharkku Ivai En Ezhutthe)*.

After reading the bond, the signature of the attestors *(Mel Ezhutthu Ittarkal Ezhutthai)*[19] are examined and found to be genuine. Then the document is handed over to the defendant for providing him with an opportunity to verify and inform the Court.

The plaintiff in this case is one who will not grant any concession to the defendant. Therefore he is quick to submit that the defendant is utterly incompetent to make any verification and suggests that the hand-writing and the signature contained in the suit document may be compared by the Court[20] with the proven signature and hand-writing of the executor of the said document. It can be seen that though the plaintiff is hypertenacious, he is yet, in all fairness, willing to subject himself to the inherent powers of the court. He is only anxious that no one else should clutch at the jurisdiction or powers of the Court. Therefore he says: *"Veru Ezhuthukai Satthu Undakil Ivvavanatthodum Ezhutthu Neer Oppu Nokki Vandhu Athu Mozhimin."*[21]

Accordingly, to clear the least doubt of the defendant or his case, documents bearing the admitted signature and calligraphy of the grandfather of the defendant are fetched from safe-custody *(Aran Tharu Kappu)* and the comparing takes place. The signature and the handwriting are indentical *(Irandum Otthirunthathu)*. The plaintiff's case is proved beyond doubt. The defense has failed.

Judgement is pronounced forthwith whereby the Court doth order and decree that the defendant is bound to the plaintiff in perpetual service (bondage). Thus ends this famous trial. It is gratifying to see, that on the self-same day when a plaint was preferred, it was taken on file 'emergently', transferred forthwith to the Court of competent jurisdiction, tried and disposed of in accordance with law, without any law's delay[22] of which William Shakespeare so much complained.

The Periya Puranam and the Hymns of St.Sundarar

Of all the *Tevaram* hymns, the hymns of St.Sundarar's are the most auto-biographical. Many of his decads read like the diary maintained by a serviteur of the Lord. His love and agony, his trials and tribulations, his ecstasy and despair, his triumphs and failures, his thanks-giving and fault-finding are richly detailed in his decads.

His Birth on Earth

Nampi Aroorar in his heavenly pre-existence was known as Alala Sun-

darar. His duty was to gather honied blooms and weave them into garlands fit for the Lord. He was also the bearer of His Holy Ash. One day while gathering flowers he chanced to eye Anintitai and Kamalini, and a longing possessed him. Lord Siva from whose vision nothing could escape, thereupon commanded him thus:

"You set your mind on the damsel-pair;
Be born in the southern realm,
Be linked with them in loving joy
And then return (with your desire duly fulfilled)." - 37.

Hearing this he was dismayed. Folding his hands in adoration he entreated the Lord thus:

"O Lord, if in my confounding human existence
I stand bewildered, deign to redeem me
By Your gracious intercession." - 38.

His prayer was granted. The denizen of Heaven came to be born on earth, the planet full of illusive diversions. Kamalini and Anintitai incárnated as Paravaiyar and Sangkiliyar respectively. Aroorar first married Paravaiyar and later Sangkiliyar.

That he came to be born a mere man forfeiting his heavenly status, *tormented him sorely*. It is thus he gave vent to his misery in a psalm which begins with the words: "Kari ma milaku..."

O pure One whose dance is *witnessed by Her*
Of long and dense koontal!
O Lord enshrined at Nelvayil Aratthurai
On the bank of the river Niva which flows amain
Rolling with creepers of edible pepper and strong trees!
You caused me to get born as a man
In this sterile, mutable world;
I must needs die; be pleased to reveal the way
To reach Your feet which I must attain
After quelling these, my five senses at their very source.

Incidentally it may be observed that this hymn is echoic of Kural number 6 which runs thus:

"Those shall long prosper who abide in the faultless way of Him who has destroyed the five desires of the senses."

Men fall and angels too. St.Manickavachakar says:
"You blessed me with an estate which I ill-perceived
And lo, I am lost!"

St. Sundarar was truly blessed with a beatitude beyond the reach of even the truly holy. Yet he too suffered a fall. Lucifer was more than an angel. He was an archangel. Yet he slipped into irretrievable perdition. However in the case of St.Sundarar he is ever seen to be extremely contrite. He surrenders totally and irrevocably, to Lord Siva and implores him to reveal unto him the way of blissful release. Indeed just before his ascension he confessed to the Lord of Tiruvanjaikkalam thus:

"Verutthane manai Vazhkkaiyai vittozhitthane..."

"I loathe my life on earth and have forsaken it..."

Tiruvalluvar says that desire is truly a birth-breeding seed *(Pirappeenum vitthu)*. The life of our Saint has proved the truth of this dictum, most indubitably.

St. Sundarar's Marriage First with Paravaiyar and then with Sangkiliyar

The Periya Puranam sings of St.Sundarar's marriages in detail. Our Saint also refers to his married life in his hymns, in more places than one. His decad on the Lord of Tiruvaroor sung at Tiruvotriyoor contains the following hymn which begins with the words *Yezhisaiyai isaippayanai....*

He is the sevenfold music and the fruit thereof;
He is nectar sweet and also my friend who stands by me
Even when I commit wrongful deeds; He gifted to me
Paravai whose eyes are like the two halves
Of a symmetrically slit tender-mango;
He is my Ruler; lo, can I, the poor, brainless one
Suffer separation from Him, the Lord of Aroor?

Again his decad on Tirumuthukunram beginning with the words: *Pon ceitha meniyineer* refers to the name of Paravaiyar eight times. The fifth hymn of this decad contains a description of Paravaiyar, though it does not mention her name. Likewise the decad on Tiru-k-Kolilee beginning with the words: *Neela ninainthu* contains many references to Paravaiyar who is also twice named in that decad.

His life with Sangkiliyar is referred to in his decad on Tiruvamatthoor. The fourth hymn of this decad begins with the words *Omthanan omthanan....*

Him I comprehended by thinking and thinking on Him;
At the luminous Ens abiding in the heart I arrived, I arrived;
Entering Tiruvotriyoor I had myself linked, aye, linked
To Sangkili, and full well flourished
In her soft shoulders and buxom breasts;
Thus, even thus, was the grace of the Lord
Of Amatthoor made manifest to me.

Though he felt happy in the company of Sangkiliyar and though he had promised to her that he would not on any account leave Tiruvotriyoor, our Saint could not bear separation from the Lord of Aroor, more so, in view of the fast approach of the Vasantha uthsava at Tiruvaroor. Remaining as he did at Tiruvotriyoor, he poured out his feelings in a touching decad, and verse 11 thereof is as follows. It begins with the words *"Vangka mali Katal..."*

To save the celestials He gave them nectar while He Himself
Ate the poison of the ocean where barks plied aplenty;
He cared even for me -- the worthless one --, and had me
United with Sangkili! How can I -- the evil one --,
Be parted from the Truthful one -- my Deity of Aroor --,
To abide here but to waste away?

After offering his prayer to the Lord of Otriyoor he proceeded to move out of the temple with a view to leave for Tiruvaroor However even as he moved out, the light of his eyes became extinct; he could not behold the very ground he was treading. He swooned. After sometime when he recovered, he invoked the grace of the Lord of Otriyoor. Verse 2 of this decad directly refers to Sangkiliyar and to the plight he was put, on account of his breach of the promise. The hymn which begins with the words *"Kattanane piranthane ...."* is as follows:

O Ashta Moorti! O Lord enshrined at Otriyoor!
Though I, of sinful deed, took birth on earth
I yet became Your serviteur; how shall I -- Your serviteur --,
Narrate these, and to what purpose?
Even though I have erred, I have never committed
A wrong unto Your feet; I have remained steadfast
In my service to Your feet; all Your doings are
On account of the love I bore for Sangkili.

A careful reading of the *Periya Puranam* as well as our Saint's hymns clearly shows that our Saint had great love for his wives. However, this love was nothing comparable to the love he had for Lord Siva, at all times.

Siva's Claim of St.Sundarar as His Bonded Slave

The *Periya Puranam* informs us that Lord Siva disguised as an old Brahmin, appeared before Nambi Aroorar when the latter was about to wed the daughter of Sadangkavi Sivacharyar at Manamvanthaputthoor, and claimed him as His bonded slave. This led to a serious lis and the Lord won His case as He was able to produce before the Tribunal an ancient document by and under which the grand-father of Nampi Aroorar had bound, not only himself but also his heirs, to render perpetual service to Him. The hymns of our Saint contain many a reference to the document whereby he was

enslaved by the Lord. Verse 5 of the decad on Tirunavaloor runs thus:

The Lord broke the shoulder of the king of the celestials;
He peeled off the hide of a tusker;
His hue is like unto ruddy gold and flame;
He is the Wearer of the pure white Ash;
He -- our Lord --, made a slave of me
At Vennainalloor by means of a document;
The town of our Lord -- be it known --,
Is truly Tirunavaloor.

The above verse begins with the words: "Umparar Konai...."

Every verse in this holy decad makes a pointed reference to the Lord's gracious act of enslaving our Saint who was called Van-Tondar by the Lord as he chose to cross swords with Him in the lis. This fact is also adverted to in verse 2 of this decad.

The judges of Vennainalloor, no doubt, passed a verdict in favour of the Lord who argued His case before them, disguised as an old Brahmin. However, they were assailed by a doubt. The document relied on by the old Brahmin described his name as *Perumuni*. It also spoke to the fact that he was a resident of Vennainalloor. However, none of the judges had ever seen him in that town. So, they said:

......"O rare Brahmin!
The deed that you showed us, describes you as one
Native to our glorious town; if it be so,
Show us your house of hoary lineage." - 210.

The holy *Muni*, the winner of the peerless case said:
"If none of you know me, then follow me."
Followed by the thronging Brahmins and Aroorar,
He walked before, and entered Tiru-Arul-Turai,
And there vanished abrupt; others stood perplexed. - 211.

Verse 5 of our Saint's decad on Tiru-k-Kolakka testifies to these facts. It begins with the words: *Anru vantu enai....*

That day He came, and in the presence of many
In this wide world, told me thus:
"May you serve me as a slave!"
He also flourished a deed
And firmly pressed His claim;
Then at Vennainalloor He disappeared!
Verily He is like unto a bunch of lucent pearls;
He is truly poised in the act of liberating souls;

He, the Lord of the celestials, wields a mountain-bow;
His anger smote the skyey forts -- high and mighty.
Lo, I have beheld Him with His Consort
Of soft mien, at Kolakka.

Verse 4 of this decad makes a reference to the Lord's enslaving Nambi Aroorar.

Scholars are of the opinion that the disappearance of the Lord into Tiru-Arul-Turai (the temple of Siva at Vennainalloor) should have taken place at about 10-30 A.M. This reckoning is made on the basis of the following facts. After the disappearance of the Lord, Aroorar moved into the temple impelled by love. He called Him aloud. Thereupon, the Lord appeared on high, mounted on His Bull, and spake to him thus:

"You were my serviteur formerly: as on women
You set your mind, you came to be born on earth
By Our fiat; that a life full of misery may not
Become your lot, We followed you, interceded
And claimed you in the presence of pious Brahmins." - 213.

Then the Lord bade him hail Him in hymn and song and psalm. Blessed by the Lord, St.Sundarar sang his first decad on the Lord which opened thus: *Pittha!...* This decad was sung in *Indalam* of *Maruda-yazh*. *Indalam* is *pakal-pann* (a raga sung during day-time). The time which is assigned to this pann is 10 to 12 *nazhikais* in the morning. A *nazhikai* is equivalent to 24 minutes. So, St.Sundarar should have commenced his singing any time between 10-00 A.M., and 10-48 A.M. This reckoning, in a way, is corroborated by a verse of St.Sundarar's. Verse 10 of his Tiruvaroor decad beginning with the words: *Otti atkontu...* runs thus:

He launched a lis against me and winning it
Claimed me; then on a sudden He hid Himself;
He is the noon-like Lord, His robe is cinctured with
A venomous snake; He is both Day and Night;
He is the honey gushing in the minds of those that think
On Him fervently; He is like the juice of sugar-cane
And its sweet lump; He is the Father of Muruka who
Out of his love for the *Devas* smote *Soora* that stood
A tree amidst the sea; He is the Author of the Vedas;
He is of opulent Aroor; can I ever forget Him at all?

The phrase: *Ucchi-p-Pothan* (He who is noon-like, or, He of the noon), in the context, is interpreted as the hour that *marks the completion* of the Lord's act of redemptive grace. The decad contains eleven stanzas, and if sung in the traditional way would take about 90 minutes for its musi-

cal rendering. The completion of the decad should have taken place exactly by the noon when the Lord manifested Himself to our Saint. This is what the *Periya Puranam* says:

"Listening to the decad of dulcet Tamil
Melodiously rendered by His devotee, the Lord said:
"May you continue to hymn Our manifold praise."
Thus the Lord, the Smiter of the triple skyey cities,
Enshrined in Tiru-Arul-Turai of Vennainalloor
Graciously commanded him in compassion true
That all the worlds may be blessed
With his redemptive grace."

As the command of the Lord: "May you continue to hymn Our manifold praise" synchronised with the hour of the noon, St.Sundarar calls Him *Ucchi-p-Pothan*. However, it must also be observed here that *Ucchi-p-Pothan* can also be interpreted in a different way.

Tirunavaloor: The Birth Place of St. Sundarar

The *Peirya Puranam* informs us that Tirunavaloor is the town sanctified by the birth of Nampi Aroorar. The hymns of our Saint bear ample testimony to this fact.. In Tiru-th-tonda-th-Tokai our Saint describes himself as "the beloved son of Sataiyan who had reached the feet of Hara, and *Isai Gnani.*" He also calls himself "the prince of Tirunavaloor".

Yennavanam Aranatiye atainthitta Satayan
Isaignani Kathalan Tirunavaloor-k-kone

are the words occurring in this hymn.

It is significant to note that the signature poem which concludes the decad on Tirunavaloor, beginning with the words: *Nathanukkuoor....* runs thus:

'It is the town of the Lord; it is our town too;
It is the town where Narasingkamunaiyaraiyan
Willingly serves the Lord; it is indeed
Beauteous Tirunavaloor!' Thus have we --,
Van-Tondan Arooran, the one fully competent --,
Hymned in Tamil for others to recite.
The *Karma* of them that willingly cultivate this decad
Or listen to it, will surely be set at nought..

The self-same idea is reiterated in the envoi verse on Tiruninriyoor which is as follows:

Whosoever acquires valiancy in these
Ten fitting Tamil hymns sung by Arooran
On the Lord who is the glorious source of blissful release,
Enshrined at Tiruninriyoor -- inseparable from
The servitorship of the famed congregation of devotees --,
Will have their *Karma* annulled;
Adored by the earth-born and the celestials
They will reach the feet of the Supernal Lord.

This verse begins with the words: *Serum pukazhth tondar...*

The concluding hymn of the decad beginning with the words: *Seruvinir sezhung kamalam* on *Tiru-p-pukaloor* is as follows:

Whoever is proficient in these ten hymns
Sung by *Van-Tondar* -- the young one of Sataiyan,
The father of Vana-p-Pakai, and a native
Of Navaloor dight with melliferous gardens --,
On the opulent Lord of lofty Pukaloor in the south
Which is rich in fields where red lotuses glisten,
Will reach the feet of the Lord who is piety incarnate.
This is indubitably certain.

Innumerable indeed are the references to Navaloor. We will conclude this topic by citing but one more instance. The concluding hymn of the decad on Tiru-th-Thuraiyoor is as follows. It begins with words: *Seyyar Kamalam....*

Whosoever has mastered these hymns sung
By Ooran whose Tamil is never flawed by falsity
And who is the prince of Navaloor which is
Rich in fields where red lotuses burgeon,
On the Lord of Thuraiyoor hailed by all,
With hands folded in adoration,
Will truly gain the path of *tapas*.

The Names of our Saint's Parents

The *Periya Puranam* mentions Sataiyanar as the father and *Isai Gnaniyar* as the mother of our Saint. There are a good many references to these names in the hymns of our Saint. Tradition has it that our Saint had his ascension when he was eighteen years old. The word *Siruvan* means a boy or a lad. Our Saint frequently refers to himself as a Siruvan. This clearly shows that he was a lad when he served the Lord on this earth. The eleventh verse of the decad on Tiruyethirkolpadi, begin with the words *Mutthu neetru....*

Whoever is proficient in the hymns sung
By Ooran, the *bhakta* -- the young one of Sataiyan
The servitor of servitors --, whose heart is after
The worship of the Supreme One --
The Lord who wears the Ash lustrous as pearl,
The Lord whose frame is coral-like in hue,
The Lord whose matted hair is red,
The Lord who links the minds of His devotees to His feet,
The Lord of Yethirkolpadi --,
Will be ever blessed to hail His feet.

The signature hymn of the decad on Kalayanalloor has this phrase:

"Nanputaiya nan Sataiyan Isaignani Siruvan
Navalar Kone Arooran...."
[The prince of Navaloor -- Arooran --, who is
[The young one of companionable and goodly Sataiyan
And Isai Gnani....]

We have already quoted the concluding hymn on Tiru-p-Pukaloor in which also our Saint describes himself as "Van-Tondan, the young son of Sataiyan." Verse 10 of the decad on *Tiruvatikati Veerattanam* describes our Saint as *Isaignani Siruvan* (the young son of Isai Gnani). Verse 10 of the decad on *Kazhumalam* describes him as *Sataiyanran Kathalan* (the beloved son of Sataiyan). We meet with the same description: *"Sataiyan Kathalan"* (the beloved son of Sataiyan) in verse 12 of the decad on Tiruvazhkoliputthoor.

Our Saint's Name is Nampi Arooran

Verse 150 of the *Periya Puranam* is as follows:

"By the grace of the Lord, he was christened Nampi Arooran,
A name to be hailed even by great *tapaswis."*

Nampi is a word which means: "a man of excellence". Arooran is the name of the presiding deity of Tiruvaroor. Our Saint calls himself Arooran, as the name is fraught with divine significance. He always endeavoured his very best to deserve the name. That he was ever conscious of the greatness attached to his name can be seen from his hymns. Verse 10 of the decad on Tiru-k-Kacchoor Alak-k-Koyil runs thus. It begins with the words: *"Annam mannum...."*

Arooran for ever thinks on the Lord
Of Kacchur Ala-k-Koyil girt with fields
Where swans thrive for ever;
He wears on his crown the name 'Arooran'
(Which is the name of the Lord of Tiruvaroor);

A poet of enduring fame, he is the prince
Of Navaloor rich in fields; whosoever masters
This decad of Tamil garland
Sung by *Van-tondan*,
The articulator of splendorous words,
Is worthy to grace and adorn my very crown.

[N.B. Our saint refers to himself in this hymn, in the third person as well as the first person.]

Verse 11 of the decad on *Venpakkam* is significant. It begins with the words: *"Yerarum pozhil...."*

Forceful *Karma* will not attach itself to them
That hail this decad sung with loving penchant
On the blue-throated Lord of Venpakkam
By Arooran who wears on his crown
The name of Siva who is
Enshrined at glorious Tiruvaroor.

The Lord Himself announced that Nambi Aroorar was His companion. Yet when he committed a breach of his plighted word, the Lord punished him with the forfeiture of his eye-sight. Repeated prayers on the part of our Saint caused the Lord to relent. Our Saint regained the vision in one of his eyes. In this state, he arrived at Tiruvaroor. He would not dare face Paravaiyar in this plight, as she would perhaps expose him to pillory and derision. Privileged as he was by the Lord's companionship, he durst demand the Lord to bless him with vision in the other eye also. He then sang a decad, very much noted for its daring language. The envoi begins with the words: *"Karoor Kantatthu...."*

You are blue-throated and eight-shouldered;
You sport three eyes; You manifest as many scriptures;
Breast-banded Uma is concorporate with you;
You abide at Tiruvaroor *Moolattanam*.
To the knowledge of the whole world
You have quenched the light of mine eye,
-- The eye of Arooran who bears Your hallowed name.
The stigma is Yours only. Ha, may You indeed flourish!

St. Sundarar's Appearance and Attainments

As the very name suggests, St. Sundarar was a very handsome person. As a child his beauty captivated the ruler of the realm called Narasingka Munaiyar. Verses 151 and 152 of the *Periya Puranam* are as follows:

"Him beheld the king of the realm, Narasingka Munaiyar;
He felt ineffable love for the child:

Fortified by claims of intimacy,
He beseeched and obtained leave
To rear the child in royal splendour;
Thus was he brought up
As the King's Abhimana-putra.

"He grew as the beloved son of the glorious king
Firm-rooted in the culture and tradition of his lineage;
In due time he was invested with the sacred thread;
He mastered all the hoary and boundless scriptures."

By reason of his birth and royal upbringing he was alike endowed with kingly splendour and Brahmatejas *(Mannar tiruvum tangkal Vaidika-th-tiruvum pongka).*

In verse 11 of his decad on Tiruvaroor, our Saint describes himself as one in whose strong shoulders victory and beauty abide *(Tiru maruvum tiral tolan).* The concluding stanza of his decad on Tiru-k-Karu-p-Pariyaloor describes him as *Ooran* who is endowed with rock-like shoulders *(Malai malinta tol Ooran).*

St. Sundarar lived on earth for eighteen years only. He was but a boy or a lad *(siruvan)* at the time of his ascension. He describes himself as a *siruvan* in the tenth stanza of his decad on Tiruvotriyoor:

The (daily) chanter of the four Vedas
  And the (six) Angas
  Ever hailed by the world,
The young one -- *Van-tondan* who is
  Ooran and who is full of piety .....

Aroorar is *Van-tondar*

St.Sundarar was surnamed as *Van-tondan* by Lord Siva himself. *Van-tondan* means: 'a wild or contentious devotee." He wrangled with Siva and earned this name. The word *Van* is translated as 'harsh' by David Dean Shulman.

Our saint regards the name *Van-tondan* as a title of titles, as it was conferred on him by Lord Siva. Stanza 216 of the *Periya Puranam* records the very words of Lord Siva, who addressing St. Sundarar said:

"You wrangled with Me
And so, you have earned
The name -- *Van-tondan* ...."

This incident is referred to, by our Saint in the second stanza of his decad on Tirunavaloor:

That day when He came to claim
And rule me by reason of His merciful nature
Before the assembly of the judges,
As I, His servitor, wrangled with Him
And wielded harsh words, He conferred on me
The beatific title: "Van-tondan."
Later, even when I spoke unbecoming words,
He gave me gold, and bestowed on me
Exquisite comfort; for the Lord
Of such goodliness, our Tirunavaloor is
Indeed the place of residence.

In verse 10 of the decad known as: *Namakku Atikalakiya Atikal* and in the envoi-verses of decads bearing numbers 34, 36, 38, 41, 42, 45, 54, 55, 62, 64, 67, 68, 70, 72, 75, 87 and 88 St. Sundarar calls himself *Van-tondan.*

St. Sundarar is a Servitor of Servitors

Servus servorum Dei is the title by which we desire to hail St. Sundarar. Soon after his marriage with Paravaiyar, he was possessed with an uncontrollable penchant to become a devotee of the devotees. This beatitude is conferred on him by Lord Siva. Stanzas 335 to 347 of the *Periya Puranam* contain the details of this episode.

A careful perusal of the hymns of our Saint, will indubitably bring to light, the fact that he always regarded himself as a servant of the servants of Siva. The signature-hymn of the decad on *Yethirkolpadi* describes him as "Tondar tondan" (a servitor of servitors).

The translation of this verse is already given. Our Saint delights to call himself 'a servitor of servitors'. *Van-tondan* is a *tondar tondan.* Nammazhwar, the celebrated Vaishnavite saint goes a step further and calls himself *tondar tondar tondan Satagopan (Tiruvoimozhi,* 6-9-11). A true servitor is one who is delighted to serve the servitors of the Lord's servitors. Verse 10 of the decad on *Tiru-p-Punavayil* is significant.

In this verse our Saint describes himself as *Atiyar atiyan* (the servitor of servitors).

We have already referred to the loss of sight suffered by our Saint. Despite the loss, he left Tiruvotriyoor for Tiruvaroor. On his way, wayfarers came to his help. When he came near Pazhayanoor, he would not dare enter Tiruvalangkadu as it was the town sanctified by the servitorship of Peyar. Peyar, it should be remembered, reached this holy place by measuring the entire distance with her head. Our Saint's decad on Tiruvalangkadu opens thus:

O Lord ever-free! O Partner of Uma
Whose burgeoning breasts are soft!
O Conferrer of the bliss of release!
O Lord of occult powers! O Revealer
Of the way to attain occult powers!
O Siva -- the Lion among Devas!
O Prop of the *bhaktas!* O Lord who is
Hailed by many, many devotees!
O Father abiding at Alangkadu!
I'll ever be a servitor of Your servitors!

The line: "I'll ever be a servitor of Your servitors" is the refrain of the decad. When one hears this decad rendered in *Pazhampanjuram*, one will progressively begin to feel, and that too palpably, the swelling emotional intensity of the refrain. Much of the charm is missed when one merely reads the decad aloud. Our Saint, like his predecessors St. Tirugnanasambandhar and Saint Appar was a musician of a very superior order.

St. Sundarar refers by name to two of the servitors, in his envoi-verse on *Kedaram*.

Arooran is a servitor of Tirunavukkaraiyan
And Gnanasambandhan -- the lord of Tamil;
He is also the servitor of them that are
Siva's servitors, and he serves
The feet of such servitors.
They that have mastered these sweet Tamil hymns
Sung by Ooran on the Lord's Tiru-k-Kedaram,
Will be blessed to abide at *Siva-loka*.

Tiruvadi-diksha of St. Sundarar

After his enslavement by the Lord of Vennainalloor, St. Sundarar came to Tirunavaloor and hailed the Lord of gods in hymns and psalms. Then he left for Thuraiyoor where he prayed to the Lord, thus:

O Lord of Thuraiyoor which is situate
On the northern bank of the Pennai
Which rolls with huge gems
Cascading from many a waterfalls
And scatters them on its banks!
O Lord of Thuraiyoor in whose ford
Exquisitely robed damsels of lovely hips
Plunge and sport! I beg of You
To bless me with the way of *tapas*.

The refrain of the decad is: "I beg of You to bless me with the way

of *tapas*" *(Unnai Venti-k-Kolvane tava neriye)*. The Lord heard him. Of this St. Sekkizhar says:

"The Lord granted him in grace the life of *tapas*
Which prevents the sense from misleading.
Thus blessed, *Van-tondar*, folding his hands
In loving adoration of Siva's beauteous feet,
Hymned, and performed *Siva-pooja*
At Tiru-th-Thuraiyoor --
Girt with flowery and fragrant gardens --,
Where the Lord that sports on His long matted hair
The Ganga and the crescent, is enshrined.

The guerdon for a life of *tapas* is *Tiruvadi-Diksha* performed by the Lord Himself. This beatitude is conferred on a devotee who, qualifying himself, earnestly seeks for it. Very rarely it is conferred unsought, on a *bhakta*. Since St. Sundarar is both *Van-tondar* and *Tampiran-thozhar*, the Lord's dealings with him are marked by a graceful singularity. This is how the scene for the event is set. Our Saint had to pass through Tiruvatikai on his way to Tillai. Arriving at the outskirts of Tillai, he thought thus:

"Our lord -- Tirunavukkarasu, the wielder
Of Uzhavaram, hailed by the world,
Here abode, rendering manual service, with all his heart,
To the Lord, the Rider of the Bull;
I dare not set foot in the holy town." - 229.

He therefore put up at the *matam* called Siddhavatam, situate beyond the town. Before retiring to bed, our Saint meditated on the hallowed feet of Lord Siva. The Lord then chose to enact his purposive *lila*. After our Saint began to slumber, the Lord of Veerattanam, in the guise of an old Brahmin, entered the *matam* unseen. He stretched Himself on the floor, laid His lotus-feet on the head of Nambi Aroorar and made it appear that He was sound asleep. Nambi woke Him up and said: "O holy Brahmin! Your feet are resting on my head." The Lord, by way of justification, blamed His dotage. Satisfied with His reply, our Saint resting his head elsewhere, began to sleep. However, Lord Siva repeatedly pressed the head of our Saint with His feet. Aroorar could no longer sleep. He then addressed the Lord thus: "You, are, again and again, resting your feet on my head. Who are you?" By way of reply the Lord said: "Don't you know me?" He then vanished. Our Saint was thrilled to know of Him that came to confer on him the coveted beatitude of *Tiruvadi-Diksha*. He very much rued his conduct, and burst out his feeling in a heart-rendering decad. The first stanza opens thus:

Can there be a race that knows not its leader?
But I, the brainless cur, that had been living

On the hope that the blue-throated Lord
Would, one day, place His sacred foot
On my head, had alas, derided Him,
When the crescent-crested Lord -- The Rider of the Bull
That assumes any form that He pleases,
The Wearer of the tusker's hide, the Dancer
At the burning Crematorium,
The One whose banner sports the Bull,
Mine own Lord who abides at North Veerattanam
On the bank of the billowy Gedilam --,
Came to me and conferred on me that beatitude.

Our Saint was unaware of the *lila* of the Lord when it was actually enacted. He was even a trifle harsh with the Lord, who, in the guise of a Brahmin, teased him, not a little. The envoi of this decad makes a touching reference to the words |wielded| by him against the Lord. The term *mathiyathu sonna* is an indicant of the immense despair suffered by Aroorar.

Darshan at Kazhi

At Tillai the Lord commanded our Saint to proceed to Tiruvaroor. En route, when he arrived at the outskirts of Seerkazhi he thought thus:

"Into Pukali where came to be divinely born
The godly child, I dare not set foot." - 259.

So he circumambulated the holy city, without entering it. As he did so, the Lord concorporate with His Consort gave him darshan. The 58th decad of St. Sundarar's *Tevaram* celebrates this event. It opens thus:

He has averted my (future) birth and death;
In this very life, He-our Lord, hath graced me;
He is truly a Ruby whose frame is concorporate
With his Consort -- the Daughter of Himavant;
His matted hair holds in its midst the flood
That descended down from the heavens;
He is non-separate from me who is different from Him;
He is *like unto* heated iron that absorbs clean the water;
He is *Ashta Moorti;* He is our Lord.
  At Kazhumalam, the city of foison
  Which keeps afloat even during the Great Deluge
  I beheld Him, the Wearer of *kuzhai* on His ear.

When a true devotee is unable to enter a shrine for some holy reason, the Lord Himself comes to him to bless him with His *darshan*. In the spiritual world, the mountain comes to Mohammed. The Lord of Kazhi, manifesting before the circumambulating Saint, blessed Him. The words of St. Manicka-

vacakar: *Kazhumalamathanil Katchi kodutthum* (At Kazhumalam He bestowed darshan), we are prone to think, bear abundant testimony to this event.

Paddy-hill of Kundaiyoor

A great *Velala* devotee called Kundaiyoor *Kizhar* was very much devoted to our Saint. He arranged to send daily to the mansion of Paravaiyar goodly paddy, flavoury pulses, ambrosial sugar-canes and the like in great abundance, for the victuals of *Van-Tondar*. After sometime it failed to rain and the servitor fell on evil days. One day he could not send any paddy. Struck with grief, he abjured food that day. That night, Lord Siva appeared in His dream and told him thus: "We have provided you with paddy for Arooran!" The servitor woke up from his sleep and witnessed a wonder. A huge mountain of paddy stood before him. He hastened to Tiruvaroor and apprised Nambi Aroorar of the happening. Nambi Aroorar came there and beheld the miracle. He thought thus: "Unless Lord Siva Himself is pleased to provide the carriers, the paddy cannot be transported to Tiruvaroor." Our Saint therefore proceeded to Kolilee and there invoked Lord Siva. Commanded by the Lord, the Bootha-host carried all the paddy to Tiruvaroor. (Vide stanzas 3164 to 3176).

The decad bearing number 20 bears testimony to the miracle wrought by the Lord. The first hymn opens thus:

Our Lord of Kolilee! That, she of lustrous eyes
May not wilt, I have come by some grains of paddy
At Kundaiyoor; I lack men to transport the paddy;
I, Your servitor, for ever think of You
And hail You with folded hands.
Be pleased to command (Your Host) to do the transportation.

To characterise a mountainous heap of paddy as 'some grains of paddy' (*sila nellu*) may sound like a gross understatement. However, scholars inform us that a sea-like abundance in the phenomenal world is but a drop in the ocean of God's plenty. We petty mortals know not the meaning of abundance. Our Saint -- an *avatar* from Kailas --, knows of the true weights and measures.

St. Sundarar, the father of Vana-p-Pakai and Singkati

Kotpuliyar is one of the sixty-three *Nayanmars*. He was a general of the Chola king. He was very much devoted to our Saint. Stanzas 3185 to 3196 of the *Periya Puranam* set out in detail the invitation extended to our Saint by Kotpuliyar, the visit of our Saint to Nattiyatthangkudi, the home-town of Kotpuliyar, his desire to gift away his first daughter Singkati and also her younger sister Vana-p-Pakai, as servants to our Saint, and the graceful declaration of our Saint that the bangled beauties were "his

hallowed daughters", etc.

Many of the signature-hymns of our Saint describe him either as the father of Singkati or Vana-p-Pakai or both. The concluding hymn on Tiru Nattiyatthangkudi is as follows:

O ye servitors! Even if you sing not other hymns
May you sing these hymns of Tiruvarooran --
The father of Singkati whose hair is
Bedecked with bunches of flowers --,
On the Lord of Nattiyatthangkudi of hoary glory
Which is situate in the Chola country
And which is the home-town of puissant Kotpuli
Who had routed the hostile throngs of kings.
If you so sing, your sins will perish altogether.

The signature-poems of decad numbers 27, 37, 47, 57, 68, 70 and 98 refer to our Saint as the father of Singkati. The concluding hymns of decad numbers 12, 29, 30, 33, 44, 57, 68 and 87 refer to our Saint as the father of Vana-p-Pakai. It can be seen that decad no. 68 which is on Tirunallaru, in its concluding stanza mentions our Saint to be the father of both Singkati and Vana-p-Pakai.

Gift of Gold to St. Sundarar

When the time for the celebration of Pangkuni-Uttharam festival drew near, our Saint desired to come by gold so that his wife Paravaiyar could be endowed with the wherewithal to make liberal gifts to the Lord's servitors. So, he proceeded to Tiru-p-Pukaloor to hail the Lord and get the needed gold. There he prayed to the Lord fervently, though his prayer was not answered immediately. He did not desire to move out of the temple empty-handed. He tarried with the servitors in the temple's court. Then took place an unusual incident. On a sudden he was besieged by sleep though it was not the hour for siesta or slumber. The shrine at Tiru-p-Pukaloor perhaps needed some renovation. Bricks were stored in the temple for this purpose. He had a few of the bricks brought to him and had an eminence raised. He spread on it his upper garment of silk so that he could rest his tufted head on it as on a pillow. He slept for a while. So too his devotees. When our Saint woke up, he found to his great surprise that the bricks which served him as pillow, had turned into gold. Thereupon he offered a soul-stirring decad as a mark of his abundant gratitude. The decad does not contain a specific reference to this miracle, but its message is clear. It says that poets should hail the Lord and not men deemed munificent. The Lord will provide them with food and shelter. Since the Lord of Tiru-p-Pukaloor had proved this by performing a miracle, our Saint, we think, was impelled to appeal to all the poets of the world to emulate him. The first hymn of the decad on Tiru-p-Pukaloor runs as follows:

O ye poets! Even if you flatter and please them
And be companied with them as their servants
The false ones give you nothing at all;
Sing ye therefore of my Father's Pukaloor.
For your life here He will bestow on you food and shelter;
Your fame will increase; your misery will end;
In your life hereafter you will reign in *Siva-loka;*
This is the truth unimpaired by doubt.

Our Saint in his pilgrimage visited Tiruvanaikka and eventually came to Tiru-p-Pacchilachiramam and hailed the Lord there. He was in need of gold and he prayed to Lord Siva. The Lord, however, would not give him what he sought. As a companion of the Lord, he had every right to persist in his demand. But then, the Lord too was equally persistent in His refusal. Our Saint would not move out of the temple empty-handed. He continued to stand before the Lord of Pacchilacchiramam. This is how the subsequent events are described by St. Sekkizhar.

"Poised in his friendly servitorship married
To his God-fearing nature, he grieved sorely as he was not
Blessed with the gold he sought from the Lord;
As if complaining to the servitors who stood close by
He began to sing a decad in melting devotion;
Apparently addressing them he questioned thus:
"Barring Him, there is no other God at all?" - 3234.

The Lord hearkened to the holy tirade of His companion, and then, -- and then only --, blessed him with a heap of pure gold. As the conferment of gold took place after the conclusion of the decad, there is no reference to it in the decad. But the decad is surely a bold manifesto of *Van-tondar*, the wild devotee. The first hymn of the decad bursts out thus:

I dedicated my head and tongue to Him only;
With all my heart and without any guile whatever
I serve His hallowed feet; if I were to speak
Of these, it would but sound spurious;
While my plight is such He is there wearing a *Kovanam*,
And a serpent of spread-hood cinctures His waist.
He is like a mad one, and if He graces me not
None there is, alas, who as Lord-God can succour me!

St. Sundarar remembers gratefully the gift of gold and hails the Lord for the act even in shrines where the physical giving did not take place. The decad on Tiruvamatthoor is in point. The 8th hymn is as follows:

"Gold, oh gold is He; conferring gold on me
He, the luminous and fulgurous Lord held me

Making it impossible for me to part from Him;
He is the import, the very import of the Vedas;
The Lord of Amatthoor is mine own, mine own;
In love will I enshrine Him in my heart
And flourish in ecstasy."

The opening hymn of the 59th decad is as follows:

He is the Conferrer of gold and aeviternal truth;
He is the Granter of joy and bliss;
He is the Forgiver of my violations;
He is also the Inculcator who bids me
Avert all violations;
He is my Lord-God of unknowable nature;
He is the Supreme One, easy of access;
He abides at beauteous Aroor in whose fields
Swans thrive. Can I ever afford to forget Him?

At Tirumuthukunram Lord Siva gifted to our Saint gold weighing twelve thousand sovereigns. Our saint thereupon entreated the Lord thus:

"I should come by all this gold You have deigned
To grant me, at Tiruvaroor to the wonderment
And bewilderment of all dwellers there."
When he beseeched Him thus, the Lord spake to him
In an unbodied and ethereal and lucid voice thus:
"Drop the gold in the fecund Manimutthu river
And recover it all in Tiruvaroor-tank." - 3262.

Here Van-tondar, without straightaway dropping all the gold as bidden, cut a piece from a bar for his keeping, marched toward the river and consigned the heap of gold to the river thinking thus:

"By this will I truly know the grace of His having
Forcibly and voluntarily claimed me that day
As His serviteur."

Then he visited several shrines and eventually came to Tiruvaroor. He spent his days in joy with his wife. As days rolled on, one day he told his wife thus:

"Our Lord of Muthukunram blessed us
With goodly wealth; I have consigned it
To the holy Manimutthu river; now fare forth
With me to retrieve it by His grace from the tank
Situate on the west of the temple of the Lord
Who is the (sole) Aid unto me."

Paravaiyar who was struck with wonder accompanied him first to the temple and then to the tank. Our saint came to the north-eastern part of the tank. There he stationed his wife. Then he prayed to the Lord for sometime. This done, he descended into the tank and began to search for the gold under the water. The Lord of Aroor was bent upon a *lila*. Aroorar searched and searched for his gold in vain. Witnessing the fruitless activity of her husband, Paravaiyar unwilling to let slip the opportunity, made a piquant remark thus:

"Having consigned it to the river
You search for it in the tank;
Pray, tell me, if this is how you grace me!"

What could our Saint do? He could only appeal to the Lord of Tirumuthukunru through a touching decad beginning with the words: *"Pon Ceitha Meniyineer!"* It was thus his decad opened with an apposite apostrophe. Our Saint sang as many as eight hymns on the Ashta-Moorthi. However his searching hands laving in the lucid pool met with no solid gold. It was only when he concluded the heart-rending hymn -- the ninth in the decad --, the heap of gold materialised. The world wondered at it. Our Saint had his own doubt. He began to compare the touch of this gold with that of the original piece he had earlier cut from a bar. Alas, the gold he had now recovered proved to be of an inferior variety. Once again he appealed to the Lord and the holy tank rippled with the reverberations of his devotional hymns. This time, without any further ado, the Lord revealed to him the ruddy gold matching his piece and not a whit less in touch. He rejoiced as he retrieved it all.

Though this decad does not contain any reference to the recovery of gold by our Saint, it bears ample testimony to his search in the presence of his wife. The reference to recovered gold can be found only in the decad sung by our Saint by way of gratitude. This decad is not extant. So too the decad relating to the recovery of gold whose touch was the same as that of the piece kept by him.

The first and the ninth hymns of the available decad are as follows:

O Lord! Your body looks as though it is wrought of gold;
You have girt Your loin with a tiger-skin;
You burnt the triple hoary skyey cities;
You abide at Muthukunram willingly;
Before Paravai of slender and fulgurant waist,
What is it oh my Lord, You have done!
Pray, averruncate my misery.

Oh peerless Lord of the celestials!
Never have I refrained from hailing You;

You are the most ancient among the entia
In all the worlds;
You abide willingly at Muthukunru.
Before this Paravai of perfumed locks
Oh Lord-Dancer, deign to grant me (the gold)
That I -- the cruel one --, may be rid of my misery.

Verse 3345 of the *Periya Puranam* informs us that our Saint received gold from the Lord of Onakanthanthali. However the decad on this shrine contains no reference to our Saint's receiving any gold, though his demand and privileged criticism of the Lord are writ large in the decad. Our Saint is the only devotee who frequently uses unusually daring language. It is ever misconstrued as blasphemy by the uninformed. In this connection the observation of Dean Shulman is in point. "He (St. Sundarar) differs from his predecessors .... mainly in the angry tones that predominate in his verse..".

Our Saint's complaint is instanced in the following verses:

O Lord abiding at Onakanthanthali!
  No money is to be found in the hands
Of those who hail You every day
  With offerings of ghee, milk and curds.
Unless I stand redeemed by the worship
  Of Your ankleted feet, the *Five* would
Draw me close to them and cause me dance
  To their tune; lo, by their act I have fallen
Into a deep pit and am wallowing there.
  Will you not bless me with Your redemptive grace?

O Lord abiding at Onakanthanthali!
  Although I hail You with all my power
You do not even open Your lips and say: "Yes" or "No";
  How can You then rule us?
You go abegging during the whole day
  With a dead one's toothless skull
  And would not forsake Your ancient mode of life.

St. Sundarar — the Leading Light

It is said that the *Periya Puranam* is truly a *kavya* whose heroes are very many. True. Yet to inform it with a sublime sense of integrated wholeness, St. Sekkizhar so depicts the life of St. Sundarar that it is to be reckoned as a golden thread that runs through the entire *Puranam*. The author of the *Tiru-th-thonda-th-thokai* which indeed is the *Periya Puranam* in a nut-shell, richly merits this depiction.

The *Periya Puranam* as it is published to-day, contains 4286 stanzas. Of these 1256 stanzas are devoted to St. Tiurgnanasambandhar and 429 to St. Appar. The life of St. Sundarar is depicted in *Thadutthatkonda Puranam, Yeyarkone Kalikkamar's Puranam, Ceraman Peruman Nayanar's Puranam* and *Vellaiyanai-ch-Charukkam*. These in all cover 840 stanzas. Again at the end of each *Charukkam*, a stanza is devoted exclusively to St. Sundarar. Besides, the *Puranams* of Somasimara Nayanar, Perumizhalai-k-Kurumpar, Sadaiyanar and Isaignaniyar contain references to our Saint.

The first place among Nayanmar is assigned to St. Tirugnanasambandhar. This assignment of the pride of place is on the basis of holy tradition and convention. This should be appreciated in the proper spirit. The devotee is repeatedly warned that all Nayanmar are equally important and that he should not discriminate between Nayanar and Nayanar. Describing one Nayanar as superior to another will be tantamount to blasphemy. "Comparisons are odorous -- *palabras*, neighbour Verges" said Dogberry. (Much Ado About Nothing, 3, 5, 15). Each Nayanar is great in his own way. St.Sundarar is entitled to our especial gratitude as it is he who had given us the great Tiru-th-thonda-th-thokai. Saivism is safe so long as this is extant. The author of this hymn was particularly extolled and venerated by all his contemporaries.The envoi of St. Sundarar's decad (bearing number 64) makes a pointed reference to this. This reference is not born out of pride or vanity. It is truly more objective than subjective, and is as follows:

"The unending but unenduring cycle of life
  Has to be detested; we should rise above this;
That indeed befits us." Thus clarifying the mind,
  Nambi *Ooran* who is *Van-tondan* -- the Prince
Of Navaloor whose glory is hailed throughout the country --,
  Has hymned the divine feet twain of Lord Siva
At the town Tirutthinai which is girt with lofty gardens;
  Whoever is blessed with a valiancy to sing
These ten Tamil stanzas is sure to come by *Mukti*,
  The final and supernal beatitude.

N.B.: The Dharmapuram edition of the *Seventh Tirumurai*, 1964, however says that the proper reading is *Natalam Pukazh* and not *Natelam Pukazh*.

That the hymns of St. Sundarar were praised by his contemporaries is a fact which cannot be gainsaid by anyone. The following verse on Tiru-k-Kolakka bears ample testimony to the glorious popularity enjoyed by the Saint's hymns.

His matted hair is like unto the rooting branches
  Of the banyan tree; He is sweet like the sugarcane;
He is our Lord enshrined in Kolakka;

On Him has Navalooran -- *Vantondan* --, sung
Hymns much loved by the traditional servitors
Who ever hail Him in truthful songs;
Those that sing these ten stanzas with a melting mind
With a view to learn the way leading to Him,
Will be blessed by the Lord that dances in the Crematory,
With a lofty beatitude; there they will thrive for ever.

All the greatness as well as glory of our Saint has its source and sustenance only in Lord Siva. The very first verse of our Saint contains a valuable reference to the fact that the Lord chose to abide in Him for ever. The verb Vaitthai in the third line is unambiguously zeugmatic. *Manatthu unnai vaitthai* (You have housed Yourself in my mind-heart) is a grateful acknowledgement of the devotee, just then won over by the Lord. From then on, our Saint could say: *Dominus illuminatio mea* (The Lord is the source of my light). He is consistently insistent. However, the hymns of his demand articulate but one message: *Magnificat anima mea Dominum* (My soul doth magnify the Lord). Two were his beautiful brides. However at the close of the eighteenth year of his terrestrial existence, he loudly proclaimed thus: *Verutthàne manai Vazhkkai* (I abominated the domestic life). His ascension differed from that of any other saint's. He was translated to *Sivaloka* on the white tusker -- not the mount of *Indra*, but Siva's --, and struck with wonder, the saints of Kailas questioned Siva as to who he was, and Lord Siva said:

"He is Our kin, Ooran."
Mantira mamunivar yivan aar yena emperuman
Nanthamar Ooran yenran....

As he was proceeding to Kailas, the same question was put to St.Upamanyu and his reply was a narration of the life of St.Sundarar.

Such is the glory of the life of St.Sundarar that it begins and ends in Kailas.

Tillai-Vazh-Antanar (Chidambaram Dikshadars)

According to a decision of the Madras High Court (Natesa Vs Ganapati, ILR XIV, Madras, p.103) the Tillai-Brahmins are *Smarta* Brahmins. These are both dharmakartas and worshippers. These are called Dikshadars who, "from time immemorial, have held both offices in that institution which is one of considerable antiquity and renown in South India." The above decision (1890 A.D.) also says: "About 250 families of Dikshadars reside at Chidambaram, and the net income of the temple which is derived from general offerings, is their recognised means of livelihood. According to the usage every Dikshadar becomes entitled, on marriage, to take part in the management, to do *pooja* or perform service in the minor shrines,

until he is twentyfive years old and initiated in a ceremony called Diksha.

There are five principal shrines and they are called (1) *Chit Saba*, (2) *Kanaka Saba*, (3) *Deva Saba*, (4) *Amman Covil* and (5) *Mulasthanam*. Of these, the first is the seat of the presiding deity, named *Saba Nayakar* or Natesar; unless service is held in it, it can be held, according to custom, in no other shrine."

The Tillai Brahmins were three thousand in number. There are specific references to this number in the *Tevaram*. However, as years rolled by, the number dwindled. Of the three thousand, Lord Siva was counted as one. Their history, as well as the history of Tillai, in greater detail, is traceable from another reported decision of the Madras High Court. (Marimuthu Dikshithar representing the Podhu Dikshithars of Sri Sabhanayagar Temple, Chidambaram Vs The State of Madras represented by the Secretary to Government, Rural Welfare Department, Madras and another (1952 (1) MLJ p.557). "The temple at Chidambaram, *Chit* and *Ambalam* (the atmosphere of wisdom), is a public temple of great antiquity sacred to Saivites all over India. According to the South Arcot Manual of the year 1878, the area occupied by the temple is about 39 acres in the centre of the town. Of the five *Lingams* of Siva, corresponding to the *Panchabhutas* earth, water, light, air and *akasa* (ether), the *Lingam* in this temple is *Akasa Lingam*. In fact, no *lingam* exists but a curtain is hung before a wall on which *Beejaksharas* were written and when people go to worship, the curtain is withdrawn to enable the worshippers to see the *Lingam*. Offerings are made before the curtain. This is generally known as *Chidambara Rahasyam*, the secret of Chidambaram. The Manual at page 401 refers to a legend going back to the fifth Manu, one of whose sons Swetha Varma who was a leper and who therefore refused to rule over the country, the Kingdom of Gouda allotted to him by his father. Leaving his kingdom, he set out on foot on a pilgrimage and came to Conjeevaram where he met a hunter who informed him that there was a famous *Rishi* nearby with tiger's paws, who lived in a jungle near a *Kovil* where an invisible deity dwelt. Near the *Kovil* there was also a pool. Swetha Varma, out of inquisitiveness, met the *Rishi* who was called Vyagrapada. With his divine foresight the Rishi came to know of the arrival of Swetha Varma and told him to bathe in the pool. Thereupon, the dreadful disease vanished and his skin became golden in hue. In consequence he was known thereafter as Hiranya Varna.

"The Dikshidars who live nearby are Brahmins having some peculiar customs of their own and the *pagoda* is practically treated as their property. They claim a divine origin for themselves and the story is that Brahma took them from Tillai (Chidambaram) to perform *Yagnam* near Benares where they stayed till they were invited by Hiranya Varna at the suggestion of the deity at Chidambaram. Tillai Muvayiratthar or the three thousand men of Tillai known as Dikshidars arrived at Chidambaram, and to their amazement and distress, it was discovered that their number was less by one. It was then the *Akasha Vani* or the voice of ether announced that

it was God Himself *(Sabha Nayagar)* who was missing. *Sabha Nayagar* is the name of the presiding deity in the temple. Prof. Wilson in his Glossary says that the Dikshidars are really a branch of the Kanoj Brahmins whose abode is the modern Allahabad.

"This temple (at Tillai) had many peculiar features which are not common to the other temples in India. The management of the temple, all along, vested in the Dikshidars of whom there were 253 families at the time of the Manual now reduced to 250. Every married male of the sect has an equal voice and control in the management of the temple. The right of management does not go by succession, but is acquired by birth and marriage, so much so, every boy born and married, becomes entitled to share the privilege and perquisites incidental to the management which is terminable only at his death. This is an inducement to early marriage of boys even at the age of 5. It is a close community as they do not marry from any outside families but only from among themselves. Hence the proverb noticed in Thurston, Vol.1, *Castes and Tribes*, page 338, that a "Tillai girl never crosses the boundary line."

"The management is by turns. They are the Dharmakartas as well as *Archakas* of the temple. They had framed rules for the management of the Temple, for the custody of the properties, particularly the jewels, even as early as 1849... They are generally on duty in the *pagoda*, twenty at a time, and each batch of twenty stays on duty for twenty days. Though every married male is entitled to take part in the management, till he attains the age of twentyfive, he is not considered to be qualified to perform the principal rituals in the (main) shrine. For this purpose, he is to be initiated ....

"The temple has five *Sabhas* or halls called the *Chitt Sabha*, *Kanaka Sabha*, the *Deva Sabha*, the *Nirutta Sabha* and the *Raja Sabha*. There are also the *Amman Koil* and the *Moolasthanam* besides a *Vishnu Koil* and a *Pillaiyar Koil*. The *Chitt Sabha* is the seat of the presiding deity called Sabhanayaka or Nataraja, and unless service is first held in it, according to usage, it cannot be held in any other shrine.

"...The worship in the temple is according to Vedic rites and not in accordance with *Agama sastras* as in other temples. The expense of conducting the seven *Kalotsavams* is provided by *podu* Kattalaidars or common Kattalaidars who, instead of money, supply the articles necessary for the *abhishekam*, *archana*, *naivedhyam* etc. The seven *kalams* are: milk *naivedhya* between 6 and 7 A.M. at the principal shrine; *Kalasandhi* between 8 and 9 A.M.; *Irandam Kalam* between 10 and 11 A.M.; *Uchi kalam* at 12 noon; *Sayaraksha* at 6 P.M., night *Irandam Kalam* at 8 P.M. and *Arthajamam* at 10 P.M. At all the six *Kalams* except the first, *abhishekam* is done to the *Spatika Lingam* called Chandramouliswara. *Abhishekam* to the *Marakatha Murti* known as Rathnasabapati is done only at *Irandam Kalam* between

10 and 11 A.M. No *abhishekams* are done to the principal deity, Nataraja Murti and *Sivakami Amman*, except on special occasions. For all these, the *Podu Kattalaidars* provide the materials. There are also the *utsava Kattalaidars* whose duty is to meet the cost of the *utsavams*. Besides these, the Dikshidars undertake on behalf of religious minded people, to perform an *archana* or *abhishekam* on stated days when cooked food is offered in the name of the devotee. The Dikshidar receives for this purpose a sum of money annually. He sends *Veebhudi prasadam* to the devotees, the food offering being taken by him. The *Podu* Dikshidars have nothing to do with this. It is the individual right of the Dikshidar who carries on the worship on behalf of the devotees. These are individual *Kattalais*. There is yet another kind of *Kattalai* for performing an *archana*, mainly on *Janmanakshatram* days or on any special days according to the choice of the devotee. Every Dikshidar has his set of clients for this purpose and he carries out the duties for which he obtains periodical payments from his clients. With this also the *Podu* Dikshidars have nothing to do.

"The only property owned by the temple besides the site and buildings, is *Tiruvilakku Manyam*. These *manyams* were originally of the extent of about 200 acres situate in various villages and consisted of wet and dry lands and also *topes*.

"The Dikshidars have no other emoluments and they combine in themselves the functions of a trustee as well as an *archaka*. They have no *inams* and they have to devote their time exclusively to look after the affairs of the temple and carry on the worship by an internal arrangement made by them over a century ago as evidenced by the rules framed by them and which are in vogue even at the present day. They are prohibited from taking up any other avocation and therefore they must necessarily depend for their livelihood, consisting of as many as 250 families of 1,500 members on what they receive at the temple either as *dakshina* or as offerings of food known as *pavadai* and other offerings made to the deity. They are bound up with the temple, and service to God is the only source of their livelihood."

The decision of the High Court winds up with the following observation: ".... Even more than the Srivalli Brahmins (a Madhwa sect), ... the Dikshidars of Chidambaram form a religious denomination within the meaning of Article 26 of the Constitution (of India)."

Abidanachintamani refers to the Tillai-Brahmins as persons having their lineage in the hosts of Siva. In fact they did appear before St. Tirugnanasambandhar as Gana Natas. The child-saint witnessed this and pointed out this mirific appearance to St.Tirunilakanta Yazh-p-Panar. (St.170, *The Puranam of Tirugnanasambandhar*).

In "The City of Cosmic Dance," its author B.Natarajan says that the

Tillai Moovayiravar came "from *Antarvedi* (the Ganga-Yamuna doab)...." He also says that the Nataraja cult was introduced by the Tillai Moovayiravar, who, having been brought over from North India and settled here, achieved a happy synthesis of Aryan and Dravidian cults in this part of South India. According to Venkayya and a few others, Hiranya Varman was a Pallava.

St.Tirumangai Alvar says that the Lord Govindaraja enshrined in Tirucchitrakutam (Tillai) was adored by the Tillai Moovayiravar. Very probably the Tillai Moovayiravar conducted the *pooja* and *archana* for both Nataraja and Govindaraja in the past. "Sectarianism and bigotry" says B.Natarajan, "were a later phase."

The Deva Sabha houses the processional images of the temple. It is here the Dikshidars hold their meetings. It is said that King Anapaya (Kulotthunga II) gilded the Deva Sabha.

St.Umapati (A.D.1244-1320) was one of the three thousand Dikshidars. He was won over to Tamil Saivism by St.Marignanasambandhar. St.Umapati is the author of eight out of the fourteen Saiva Siddhanta *(Meikanda) Sastras*. He is also the author of the *Puranam* of St.Sekkizhar.

Mutthuswami Dikshidar (A.D. 1775-1834) has sung the glory of the Tillai Moovayiravar. In his Kirtan beginning with the words: *"Ananda natana prakasam Chitt Sabhesam"* he says: "....Nataraja is the Lord of the Tillai-Moovayiravar... Him I salute."

Note: Though the dictum of the High Court says that the Tillai Brahmins are *Smarta* Brahmins, our enquiry reveals that they are not *Smartas*. They say that they came with Siva and they form a special class. Hence, perhaps the name -- Tillai-vazh-Antanar.

The Puranam of Tirunilakantar, the Potter

The author of the first line of the *Tiru-th-thonda-th-thokai* is Lord Siva Himself. The other 87 lines are by St.Sundarar. Many are the Nayanmar and St.Sundarar should mention the name of one of them in the second line. The *Tokai* does not follow chronology. It is a work of intelligent selection informed by inspiration. Our Saint would never forget that fatal second when he, in his previous heavenly existence as Alala Sundarar, had cast his glance on Kamalini and Anintitai. That split-second-deviation has caused the forfeiture of his heavenly life for eighteen long years. Again he was removed from the immediate presence of the Lord during this time. In this context one would do well to remember the admonition of Dag Hammarskjold: "On a really clean tablecloth, the smallest speck of dirt annoys the eye. At high altitudes, a moment's self-indulgence may mean death" Markings, page 95).

Here was a Nayanar, who by reason of the preponderance of youth, was easy of virtue. The ancient Indian society winked at the incontinence of men. Polygamy was popular. When Sakuntala was to be taken to her husband's house, by way of advice, her foster-father addressed these words to her: "When thou art settled in the mansion of thy husband, show due reverence to him, and to those whom he reveres; though he has other wives, be rather an affectionate handmaid to them than a rival." (Tr. Sir William Jones).

Again, hetairism was no hamartia in olden days. Vyasa tells us that the Pandavas as guests of Duryodhana spent their nights in the company of courtesans. Viewed in this context, the act of Tirunilakanta was a peccadillo, pardonable, excusable and even permissible. However his wife thought not so. The reason is not far to seek. What is but a venial sin to an ordinary man, is a mortal sin for a Nayanar. She was therefore impelled to pronounce the ban. It was declared in the Lord's own name. Therefore is it called "the immeasurably glorious interdiction." Our Nayanar was perhaps 20 years old then. After the ban, he lived with his wife under the same roof for half a century or even more. The tabu prevailed intact.

The famous work of Robert Graves -- King Jesus -- depicts Jesus as a married celibrate. Soon after his wedding he addressed his wife thus: "Be called my wife, be called the mistress of this house. And though you sleep beside me in the bedchamber, you need not fear for your chastity."

The wife of Tirunilakantar beautifully and dutifully performed all her task. But neither, (in the Biblical sense) knew either. What is more, none else was aware of the couple's celibacy. This situation is portrayed thus by Venkatesa Natarajan: "She did everything in and around the household as heretofore. Not one chore did she omit nor disdain on account of her chagrin. But she was able to convey to her husband that she had drawn herself into a shell; she was the incarnation of Hurt Femininity, destined hereafter for patient suffering." (*Pearls from Periyapuranam*, page.15).

The life of our Nayanar was one long and continuous penance performed in expiation of the sins of all erring husbands. The life of his wife was one of ever-during patience doubled with fortitudinous forbearance. This conquest of mutinous flesh moved Siva Himself who addressed them thus:

"O ye glorious beyond reckoning!
O ye subduers of the five senses!"

Only he who had suffered hardship for several years owing to a derailment that hardly lasted for half a second, can appreciate the vigilance that lasted unabated for half a century.

The message of this Puranam is this: "Only by refraining from carnal

love are man and wife joined together in the love of God." (King Jesus, page 264).

The Puranam of Yeyar Pakai Nayanar

The acts of a *bhakta* are, more often than not, abnormal. They defy reason and ratiocination. He has a different set of weights and measures. In one sense, he is a mad man. Yet, he is sane, very sane.

A *bhakta* is different from the normal run of people. He is therefore a *Maran*. Nammazhwar also goes by the name Maran. Values of the world do not affect a devotee. He has a goal to achieve and he never gives up. His pursuit is tenacious and it laughs at hardships. He is prompted by love, pure love, and acts with a steadfastness that confounds the worldly. He will neither temporize nor compromise.

The spiritual ladder, be it known, is of many rungs. The lowest rung is *Kamam* (desire). Above this is *anbu* (love). This one takes the aspirant to the next one called *arul* (grace). The top-most rung is *tyaga* (sacrifice). Lord Siva is called Tyagaraja.

"A prophet" says Robert Graves, "has no father, mother nor brothers, except his fellow-prophets." Recast, of course, *mutatis mutandis*, the dictum reads thus: "A servitor of the Lord has no father, mother, wife, brothers nor sons, except his fellow-servitors." They own nothing. They give away their all, as libations and lustrations. For them, that which counts is the grace of Grace only. Sons and daughters, wife and relations and wealth also are of no account.

"Makkalum manaiviyum okkalum tiruvum
Porulena ninaiyatu un arulinai ninaintu"

are the words of St. Pattinatthar *(Tiruvidaimaruthur Mummani-k-Kovai)*. This saint, in the work cited, also mentions about the gift that King Varaguna made of his wife to Lord Siva. The words:

"Purikuzhal Deviyeip Parivudan Koduttha
Periya anbin Varaguna-th-Tevarum"

celebrate the great and grand love of Varaguna for the Lord. In this context, it is good to remember the words of the Brahad-aranyaka Upanishad (II 4, 5) which says:".... Verily, not for the sake of the wife, is the wife dear but a wife is dear for the sake of the Self (Godhead)."

Yeyar Pakaiyar unhesitatingly makes a gift of his wife to a lecherous-looking devotee. The maxim: "Cucullus non facit monachum" (The cowl does not make the monk) has no application to Saivism which assigns supreme

importance even to the externals. Marks, symbols, appearance, insignia: these do suffice. This self-sufficiency may not convince many. Suga Brahmam Ramaswami Sastrikal, an exponent of the *Periya Puranam* once said: "Lord Siva demanded and received from His devotees many things; but He never took with Him anything." Thus did he light a candle of understanding in our heart, which shall not be put out. In this connexion we desire to add one more word. Even if the Lord takes away, we cannot complain. "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." (Job: 1-21).

According to Dr. R.Nagaswamy, this Puranam is paralleled by the life of Sudarsana. *Vide pages 119-120, Linga Purana, Motilal* Banarsidass.

The *Puranam* of Ilayankudi Mara Nayanar

Ilayankudi Mara Nayanar is one the two *sudra* Nayanmar. He is not a *Vellala* as many aver. A *sudra* is an *Aryan*, not a Dravidian. The fourfold classification *(chatur varnam)* is Aryan, not Dravidian. A Tamil can never be a *sudra*. It is good to remember this.

This *Puranam* records the hospitality extended by an indigent and starving couple to a devotee of Lord Siva. This episode is paralleled by the one that describes the giving of a single gooseberry to *Sankara Baghavat Pada* -- the *Brahmachari*, who sought alms from an utterly destitute family. The berry was the sole possession of the family.

To offer food to the devotee-guest who called on him late in the night, our Nayanar proceeded *to his field during a densely* dark night when it rained amain, to gather the seed-paddy, sown there earlier. The seed-paddy was then fried and made into rice. To provide firewood for the oven, our Nayanar pulled down a portion of his roof. For curry, he plucked the greens which were growing in the pits of his backyard. The guest who was asleep during the preparation of food, was woken up. He woke up only to diappear in a blaze. The guest was Lord Siva Himself who blessed the couple with everlasting beatitude. The above is but a dehydrated version of the episode which is fraught with wondrous significance. No one can miss the esoteric message of this *Puranam*.

Mara Nayanar and his wife have almost done away with their *Karma*. They had had their *pusippu*. Seed-paddy alone remained. Their germination and yield augur fresh births and deaths. They were therefore prevented from germinating and growing. Indeed they were fried. Fried seeds are symbolic of annulled *karma*. The wading through the dark marked the conquest of *Anava mala, the dark* evil. Pulling out the greens *by the root* was tantamount to cutting away *pasam*. The blaze left by the divine guest was indicative of the sun-rise of Gnonis. J.M.Nallaswami Pillai says: "According to the Tiruvarutpayan (x-8), the *Prarabhda karma* is destroyed with the

body and the *Akamiya karma* (the seed of future birth), is burnt by the grace of God. In the Sivappirakasam, this is said to disappear like darkness before *Gnanasurya* ... Our Nayanar lighted the fire of wisdom and fried the seed-paddy... and thus destroyed the seed of future birth for ever."

Whatever remained as edible food was offered as Neivedhyam (Tatbodha *Kavalam)* to the Deity. God in His infinite mercy accepted it and conferred everlasting life on the couple.

This is one of the puranams which exemplies the fact that at the hour of *iru-vinai-oppu*, the Lord comes to the mellowed soul(s) and blesses him or them with *diksha*. As this is an instance of *teevira satthi-nipatam*, the initiated gained immediately *Siva-lokam*.

The Puranam of Mei-p-Porul Nayanar

In his Introduction to the Perennial Philosophy, Aldous Huxley says: "Unfortunately, familiarity with traditionally hallowed writings tends to breed, not indeed contempt, but something which, for practical purposes, is almost as bad -- namely a kind of reverential insensibility, a stupor of the spirit, an inward deafness to the meaning of the sacred words." The justness of the above dictum can be felt when one goes through the following remark of Arthur Koestler: "The great Hindu epics, the Ramayana and Mahabharata, are as full of savagery and gore as the old Testament and the first three chapters of the *Bhagavad Gita* -- the nearest Hindu equivalent to the Gospels -- and devoted to an eloquent refutation of the doctrine of non-violence." *(The Lotus and the Robot*, page 279).

For Nayanmar like Yenati Nathan and Mei-p-Porul, the Holy Ash is the greatest. To prove this, they will willingly throw away their life as if it were a bagatelle or a bauble. Mutthanathan the enemy-king who was repeatedly worsted by our Nayanar, barged into the bed chamber of our Nayanar in the guise of a Saivite servitor, pretended to instruct him in the lore of an unknown Agama and eventually stabbed him. Mei-p-Porul Nayanar meekly submitted to the treacherous cruelty. What is more, when his aide-de-camp Tatthan rushed in to do away with Mutthanathan, he prevented him and said: "Desist, he is of us." How do we describe this? Is the word "love" adequate, in the context?

"By a kind of philological accident (which is probably no accident at all,) but one of the more subtle expressions of man's deep-seated will to ignorance and spiritual darkness," says Aldous Huxley, "the word *charity* has come, in modern English, to be synonymous with 'almsgiving', and is almost never used in its original sense, as signifying the highest and most divine form of love." The Saivite Nayanmar were known for this charity.

"The lust-dieted man 'slaves the ordinances of Heaven' -- that is to

say, he subordinates the laws of Nature and the spirit to his own cravings. The result is that 'he does not feel' and therefore makes himself incapable of knowledge. His ignorance is ultimately voluntary: if he cannot see it is because 'he will not see'. Such voluntary ignorance inevitably has its negative reward. *Nemesis* follows *hubris* -- sometimes in a spectacular way, as when the blinded man ... falls into the trap which his own ambition or petulant vanity has prepared for him; sometimes in a less obvious way, as in the cases where power, prosperity and reputation endure to the end but at the cost of an ever-increasing imperviousness to grace and enlightenment, an ever completer inability to escape, now or hereafter, from the stifling prison of selfness and separateness." (*The Perennial Philosophy*, page 92).

"Father," said the Son of Man, "forgive them: for they know not what they do."

The Puranam of Viran-Mindar

St. Sekkizhar concludes this *Puranam* with the following observation:

"Why expatiate further? The world is enlightened
By the Tiru-th-Tonda-th-Tokai
And it is to Viran-Mindar we owe it."

St.Viran Mindar was a martinet. A rule is a rule and it admits, of no exception. St.Viran-Mindar held fast to this rule. For maintenance of order, regularity and discipline, the world does need to-day a few Viran-Mindars.

This Puranam speaks of pearls. Stanza 2 says:

"Bright pearls of sea, pearls from sugarcanes
That grow in the fields, cool pearls of bamboo
And lustrous pearls that fall from the tusks of tuskers:
These were cunningly wrought into garlands
By damsels whose white teeth were rows of pearls.
With these throve Sengkunroor, the first
Among the divine cities of Kerala."

Commenting on this J.M.Nallaswami Pillai says: "These were not myths but they are shells of small insects which attach themselves to the roots of sugarcane, guava, jack etc., and are what are called ground pearls and are offered to tourists in bulk, or made up into necklaces in Barbados, Montserrat and other places. Vide the extract in the *Siddhanta Dipika*, Vol. VII, page 236."

The message of this *Puranam* is this: "Revere the holy assembly of God's servitors."

The Puranam of Amar-Niti Nayanar

One of the meanings of the word *translate* is: "to remove to heaven, especially without death." Elijah was translated. The Bible says: "...Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven" (2 Kings 2-11). In Hinduism translation occurs not only to human beings but also to inanimate objects. Dhadipandan who hid Lord Krishna behind pots of curd, was translated along with the pots. Stanza 53 of *Tiru Arangkatthu Malai* runs thus:

"I lack the mind to think, the tongue to chant
Your names; my body adores Thee not twice a day;
O Lord of Arangkam girt with flowery gardens!
Pray tell me, how You, could cause the translation
Of Dhadipandan and his pots of curd?"

Pillai-p-Perumal Iyengar again refers to this incident in stanza 77.

Amar-Nitiyar, the merchant Nayanar was translated to *Sivaloka* with his wife and child and with the scale in which he and his family and all his belongings were weighed in one pan, against the *Kovanam* of the Lord that was placed in the other pan. The role played by the scale is significant. The pan into which the articles of the Nayanar were loaded and into which he and his family entered, appears to have expanded, from time to time, to accommodate them all. Mirabile dictu!

Impartiality should characterise a judge as well as a merchant. The chapter on impartiality in the Kural, concludes thus:

Vanikam Ceyvarkku Vanikam penip
Piravum thama pole ceyin.

[Trade will flourish if merchants do unto others what they do unto themselves].

The symbol of just trade is the scale.

The esoteric explication of this *Puranam*, according to J.M. Nallaswami Pillai, is as follows:

"*Iruvinai-oppu* or *Karma-samya* is a favourite phrase in the Siddhanta and means that perfect balancing of one's good and evil when all *Mala* fall off. This has no reference to one's good works being equal to one's bad works, but that perfect balance of mind which is not attracted by the false pleasures of the world nor repelled by pain and suffering in following God's law. This is analogous to the judicial mind which has to weigh the evidence with an impartial and open mind, not being impelled to this side or that side with pity or love or idea of gain of any kind, like the sharp

needle of the scale beam, which should not incline even by a point. This *Karma-samya* is possible when one gives up everything out of his love to God and His creatures. Once this is gained, he is released from the effects of *Karma*, from the cycle of deaths and births, he attains malaparipakam, is granted the vision of the *Sat Guru*, (the Guest was such in our saint's case), and he attains the grace of God (Sakti-nipada) and the vision beatific. The appropriateness of all this is evident when we remember that our saint was engaged in trade and had to deal out equal measure to all."

Feeding pilgrim-devotees and clothing them constitute *Siva-punya*. Thus avers the *Siva Dharmottaram*.

The Puranam of Yeri Pattha Nayanar

"When by just vengeance guilty mortals perish
The gods behold the punishment with pleasure,
And lay th' uplifted thunderbolt aside."

(Addision, Canto, Act iii, sc.5).

Claudian said: *"Dis proximus ille, Quem ratio, non ira movet, qui facta rependens Consilio punire potest."* (But he is the peer of the gods whom reason, not anger, animates and who, weighing the guilt, can with deliberation balance the punishment).

When we review events which happened many centuries ago, we are not to judge them by modern criteria. Just a century ago the laws of England punished with death persons who had committed offences of very trivial nature. Four hundred and fifty prophets of Baal were destroyed by Elijah. The Bible says: "And Elijah said unto them, Take the prophets of Baal; let not one of them escape. And they took them: and Elijah brought them down to the brook Kishon, and slew them there." (Kings 18-40).

Sivakami Andar carried a basket of flowers (suspended from his staff) for making garlands and wreaths wherewith to deck the deity. The musty, royal elephant chased him, plucked the flower-basket and scattered the flowers on the ground. The mahouts should have prevented this. There were five of them. By way of punishment, Yeri Patthar killed the tusker and the five mahouts. To them that say: "This is too much", we desire to point out that Adam and Eve ate, each, one apple only and our teeth are aching even to-day.

The Puranam of Yenati Nathar

"As weaponry I hold Your name -- the mystic pentad --,
In my lips; I am freed of trouble; in each birth
I serve You; I will not quit even if You put me away;

I adore and hail You, O Lord of beauteous, *Tillaicchitrambalam*,
Wearing the pure, holy ash; I seek refuge in You." (St.Appar).

Yenati Nathar was a master of fencing. He trained many warriors in this martial art. The income that he derived was spent to supply the needs of the servitors of Siva. *Atisooran*, an agnate of our Nayanar, grew envious of his prosperity. He decided to kill our Nayanar by hook or by crook. He knew of the immense love which Yenati Nathar had for the holy ash. *Atisooran* resorted to a ruse, used the holy ash and killed our Nayanar.

Abuse of the holy marks of Saivism by a wicked person is not condemned by a Nayanar, against whom they are used. A Nayanar willingly sacrifices himself. He consciously falls into the gin, and perishes. This is the hallmark of Saivite *Bhakti*. This aspect of Saivism, we know, surpasseth understanding.

The offended, the wronged and the insulted, according to Suniti, the mother of Dhruva, "should entertain no evil thought" against the offenders and the wrong-doers. (Srimad Bhagawata, viii, 17.) "Heavenly love" says John Milton "shall outdo hellish hate."

The Puranam of Kannappar

If Siva-Bhakti is personified as a human being, St.Kannappar will be the eyes of that person. Our Nayanar is the unextinguishable light of Saivism. His life of servitorship lasted for six days. Six million aeons cannot match the glory of these six days.

This *Puranam* concludes thus:

"Can there be a greater beatitude? The Lord
Of the Bull, held with His Hand the hand of him
Who was to scoop out his eye and graft it
On the Lord's eye when he beheld His injured eye,
And said: "O peerless one, be at My right for ever!"
Thus, even thus, He graced him."

None can bargain for a greater beatitude. Jesus said: "Hereafter shall the Son of man sit on the right hand of the power of God." (Luke, 22-69).

The Pilgrim's progress is thus portrayed by St.Sekkizhar.

"Limitless love welled up in him by reason
Of the fruition of his askesis in his past incarnations." - 751.

".... he climbed the immense flight of steps --
All the graded *tatwas* (six and thirty) --;" - 752.

"Even before he beheld the Lord whose matted hair
Sports the crescent, His looks of grace were cast on him;" - 753.

"*Thinnan* thought: "These are perhaps good deeds
Esteemed by the Lord of *Tirukkalatthi.*
He resolved to hold fast to this service;" - 759.

"This Thinnan is possessed by the Lord..."
"There in the hill beholding the Lord he hugged Him close;
Like the *varan* holding fast to the curved cavern hollow
He would not lose his grip;" - 765.

"..... he would not slumber
At night; during day he would go a-hunting." - 800.

"His body had come to be wrought of ethereal fire;
He moved about as love embodied.
Is he within the ken of Thought's apprehension?" - 803.

Lord Siva describes him thus:
"His form entire is all love for Us solely;" - 806.

"............ gouged
His eye and holding it with care, in his hand,
He fixed it in the eye of the First One." - 822.

"I am still left with an eye; I'll scoop it out
And graft it on His, and thus cure Him." - 825.

"(When) Thinnan took out an arrow non-pareil
And applied it to his eye, the Lord of gods
Could endure it no longer." - 826.

"(Lord Siva) announced thus thrice:
"Stop! Oh Kannappa!" - 827.

"(Siva) said: "O peerless one! be at my right for ever!"
Thus, even thus, He graced him." - 829.

Jyoti Vriksha

Philo Hridayanath, an authority on jungle-lore, has seen a tree of this genre. He observes as follows: "A sort of resinous substance pervades the tree. That indeed is the cause of its glow during night. Its radiance forms a belt of effulgence to a height of about one foot above the tree. ..... Elders are of opinion that the tree must be 500 years old.....

"The circumference of the tree is about ten feet. The colour of the sand that coats its roots resembles that of coffee-powder. I chipped some slices and put them in a bottle which I later placed on my table. When I woke up that night, I was not sure whether I was awake or in a state of dream. The table in my room was bathed in a brilliance which issued from the bottle.

"The light from the pieces of wood glowed continuously for ten nights; then it started fading as the resinous substance began to diminish ......

One more wonder remains to be told. The pieces of wood did not turn into coal after burning. All of it became cinders." *(Kadu Koduttha Yedu,* 1965).

Vision: Its Meaning

Prof. Glenn E. Yocum, in his article: "Vision of Siva: The Strange Case of Kannappa, Nayanar and His Eyes," observes: "In order to see one needs eyes. The Kannappar story takes this obvious, hardly remarkable, fact and pushes it, in rather typical Hindu fashion, to a shocking (dare one say, "eye-opening"?) extreme. The grammatical skeleton of darshan in Hindu ritual and devotion is given here narrative flesh and blood. The eyes are real eyes. They see, communicate, they also bleed. It is as if the following well-known passage from one of Meister Eckhart's sermons had found the anecdote to vivify its abstraction." The eye by which I see God is the same eye by which God sees me. My eye and God's eye are one and the same -- one in seeing, one in knowing, and one in loving." (Raymond Bernard Blankey, trans., Meister Eckhart: *A Modern Translation,* 1941, page 206.)

"It is very tempting to use Eckhart's statement and Kannappar's story as multi-religious fodder for ruminating on the many implications for mystical theology which they suggest .....".

"Keep me as the apple of the eye, hide me under the shadow of thy wings." *Psalms,* XVII, 8.

The Puranam of Kalaya Nayanar

"From every place below the skies
  The grateful song, the fervent prayer --
The incense of the heart, -- may rise
  To heaven, and find acceptance there."

- John Pierpoint.

Holy fumigation is part of *Siva-pooja.* St. Kalayar was always burning incense at or near the altar. We do not even know his real name. Kalayam,

in the context, means 'censer.' Kalayar is therefore one who carries a censer. King Solomon provided the house of the Lord with many things. Among these, special mention is made of "the censers of pure gold." (1 Kings 8-50).

The message of this *Puranam* is this: "The fragrance of the incense burnt by a true devotee smells to heaven." This is how the *Somesar Muthumozhi Venpa* sings the praise of Kalayar:

"He even sold his wife's tali to pursue his service unbroken;
Such was Kalayar, the one well-versed
In the lofty Vedas, O Somesa!
Though their means fall off, those of the hoary noble clan
Will not lose their character poised in liberality."

The Puranam of Manakkancharar

"O Lord of Tiruvarur in whose streets flourish paradisal danseuses
Of bejewelled breasts, hierodules, the host of *Rudra-Ghanikas*
As of right, entitled to hail and adore, the *Maha-vratis*
Of dangling matted hair, Brahmins, Saivites, *Pasupatas* and *Kapalikas!*"

- St. Appar.

In the above list, the Bhairavas too are impliedly included. "In every cremation ground in India" says Sri John Woodroffe, "the refulgent and divine halo of *Bhairavas* and *Bhairavis* is yet to be seen mingling with the light of the flames of funeral pyres, rending apart the waves of nocturnal darkness and illuminating the wide expanse of Heaven." *(Principles of Tantra,* Part I, Introduction. p. 27).

The religious practices of these a-Vaidihic sects are part of "a mystical reversal and revaluation of all values ..... valid only in the sacred circle of worship." As Daivid N.Lorenzen observes: "In the supra-mundane universe of the ritual, opposites coalesce and change places -- the lowest is highest and the highest lowest:" *(The Kapalikas and Kalamukhas,* p. 7).

It is significant to note that the presiding deity of the shrine at Mylapore is Kapaliswara (Lord of the *Kapalas (Kapalikas)* and not Kapaleswara (Lord of the Skull).

A Maha-Vrati belongs to the Aka-p-Pura-ch-Chamayam. It is in the habit of a *Maha-Vrati,* Lord Siva comes to the house of St. Manakkancharar on the day of his daughter's wedding.

What happened to our Nayanar after the theophany is not easy to determine. Some say that our Nayanar gained ascension. Some others maintain it is not so. Sivakkavimani C.K.Subramania Mudaliar (1940), is of the view

that our Nayanar was blessed with the eternal beatitude. About 150 years ago (1845), Mazhavai Mahalingier had said that such an interpretation would be a fitting one in the context. Sri la Sri Arumukha Navalar (Prose version of the *Periya Puranam*, 1852), affirms that our Nayanar gained forthwith Siva-Sannidi. Kanjipuram Sabhapati Mudaliar (1859) reiterates the view of Sri la Sri Arumukha Navalar. Srimad Arumukha Tambiran Swamikal (1888) is also of this view. Siva Sri Alala Sundaram Pillai (1923) does not make a specific reference to our Nayanar's ascension. For the phrase "ner petrar" (st. 33), his explanation is that our Nayanar received the grace of the Lord directly from the Lord Himself and not through any other agency. Tiru V.Kaliyanasundara Mudaliar (1934) is not specific in his observation. He is prone to be non-committal. Vagisa Kalanidi K.V.Jagannathan (1988) is deliberately non-committal.

Soon after theophany, came St.Kalikkamar. He was both glad and sad. Why? Much ink had been spilt in explication. Many and varied are the theories advanced.

The message of this Puranam is what is enshrined in a hymn of St. Appar's which begins with the words:

"Yevarenum thamaka viladatthitta tiruneerum....." "Argue not; adore the devotee of Siva. Let him belong to any sect."

The Puranam of Arivattaya Nayanar

St. Tayanar, as the name suggests, was like unto a mother. The mother deems it her prime duty to feed her child, though she herself is without food. For daily *neivedhyam* of Lord Siva, St. Tayanar supplied sennel arisi, *sengkeerai* and *mavadu*. The first two are translated as "red rice" and "red greens" by a scholar.

Two were the main varieties of paddy which ancient Tamil Nadu produced, they being *sennel* and *kaarnel*. *Sennel* is *samba* paddy. This is the superior of the two. So, St. Tayanar used this for the Lord's *neivedhyam*. *Sengkeerai* is not red greens, but greens lush and fresh. Tender mango, plain or pickled, is a delicacy. Our Nayanar offered these to the Lord every day. Such was his devotion and insistence upon this quotidian routine, that he would not survive to witness his failure of duty. "Enjatha Vattayan" are the words of St. Sundarar. (Enjuthal = Survival).

Our Nayanar would not use *sennel* for his food. It is earmarked for the Lord. Since it is corban, neither our Nayanar nor his wife could use it. The Lord in His infinite mercy. caused the yield of *sennel* everywhere. Kaar paddy ceased to grow. Our Nayanar couple had to starve. They starved, but not their service. When our Nayanar carried in a basket the sacred *neivedhyam*, he was assailed by vertigo. He grew giddy, his basket slippled

and its contents were emptied into a fissure. "All was lost" thought the Nayanar. For his failure to feed the Lord, he wanted to punish himself with death. He took out his *arival* (sickle) and began to saw away his neck. The devotee would have killed himself, had not the Lord stayed his hand and vociferously eaten the *neivedhyam* fallen into the fissure. Vigorous gormandising was going on in the fissure. There was cracking and splitting of the tender mangoes. Our Nayanar heard the sound: "Videl, Videl! So nothing was, indeed lost. This feature is thus highlighted by Velliambala Tambiran:

Sooran lost his all; Tayanar -- the light-giver --, got back
All he lost; if analysed carefully, it can be seen
That tear-bred wealth disappears with the tears of acquirer;
Wealth won by fair means, though lost, abides and yields fair fruit.

- Muthumozhimelvaippu, st. 104.

The Puranam of Anaya Nayanar

Tamil Isai, it is to be regretted, had burnt its boats, and is to-day lying marooned in a jungle-island, dusk with horrid shades. Music, it should be remembered, belongs to the *tamasa kala* and its practitioner is one who is playing with a venomous adder. He that makes a living out of it, is invariably visited with a punishment which is more than he can bear. Our saint-singers took care to dedicate it wholly, solely and exclusively to God.

A song, be it known, is to be informed by bhakti. A mellifluous kind of singing aimed at an agreeable, well-rounded tone, an even scale from top to bottom, an unborken legato, a nicety of intonation, an eloquence of phrase and cadence, a purity of vowels and an avoidance of shouting, nasality, harsh or crude sounds, disjointed registers, undue vehemence and any other form of vulgarity: these form not the soul of a song.

The mere aria or cantata, the printed or handwritten notes and notations can only provide a melodic skeleton or frame devised by the singer from his own repertoire of ornaments, embellishments, graces, roulades, trills, portamenti, arpeggios, octave-skips, melodic detours, deviations, alterations, variations, cadences and so on. It is not an exhibition of vocal virtuosity that is called for. It is bhakti -- devotion, that should be the content.

Isai is both science and art. It is a hard taskmaster. Its cultivation is not easy. Eyeing the hero who looks like a scare-crow, his friend asks:

"Did you in this walled city Madurai
Where Tamil was scanned (by scholars great),
Plunge into the depths of sweet Tamil beauteous?

Or, were you drawn to the orbit of music sevenfold?
O my king, what ails you?
What is wrong with your hill-like shoulders now?"

- The Tirukkovaiyar, st. 20.

Our Nayanar, like Lord Krishna, was a neatherd, ever to be seen with a flute in his hand. Like Krishna our Nayanar played it divinely. Even as our Nayanar breathed through it, most musically, the Panchakshara, the Lord said: "In ninra nilaiye Nam pal anaivai." Eternal life is the meed which the reed of St. Ayanar earned for him.

The Puranam of Murti Nayanar

"Is there a reason why kings seem to be
A growth from the worst seed?"

- The Kalahastisvara Satakamu of Dhurjati, st. 37.
- Tr. Hank Heifetz and Velcheru Narayana Rao.

St. Murtiyar belonged to Madurai. His love for the Lord grew day by day. He did not even hanker after flawless beatitudes. He had nothing to do with the worthless wheel of samsara that turns men, "cog meshing smoothly cog around and around." His sole concern centred about the lotuses, the feet of Lord Siva. He ground sandalwood into paste, every day and without fail, and offered it to the Lord.

During his time, the Pandya realm came to be ruled by the king of Vaduka-Karnataka. He was a Samana who hated Lord Siva. He was out to put Murti Nayanar to endless cruelties with a view to dissuade him from continuing his service to the Lord. Like Dhurjati our Nayanar mused thus:

"Is there a reason why kings seem to be
A growth from the worst seed?"

He prayed for the advent of a righteous king. The evil king eventually saw to it that our Nayanar could not, by any means, secure sandalwood at all. "If I cannot grind sandalwood, let me grind my hand -- now become useless -- " resolved our Saint. Resting his elbow on the grinding stone our Saint ground it so vigorously that the outer skin, nerves and bones were clean ground away. Would the Lord suffer this? He blessed him. The wound was healed.

As promised by the Lord, the cruel reign ended as the king passed away on a sudden. Then a Cincinnatusque turn took place in the life of our Nayanar. He became the king. Saivism began to flourish.

Our Nayanar was a sincere soul. He could not be blamed for his inability to secure sandalwood. Yet he did something which none else would do. Why? An answer is earnestly attempted by prof. Dennis Hudson (Smith College), and his paper on "Criminal Devotion Among The Nayanars" presents an altogether new perspective. He says: "Love for Shiva, it seems, does not develop without attention to the details of cultic service, nor is it expressed except through such service and usually in the midst of one's daily householder life. For example, attention to the linga may mean a commitment to supply the oil for lamps in a specific temple, or to grind the sandalpaste for a specific linga...." The Nayanars act prompted by anpu. "....anpu need not include learning and ritual purity, only a singleminded commitment of one's total nature to Shiva, a commitment expressed in a specific cultic context and experienced by others as a psychotic infatuation."

The learned Professor subjoins: "Anpu for Shiva is the normal experience we have when our feeling, thinking, and speaking are unified in an attentiveness to another that we call infatuation, but an infatuation carried beyond normal human boundaries."

The doings of the Nayanmar are not theirs. They are merely puppets and the puppeteer is Lord Siva. So, the jocose but enlightening observation of Prof. Dennis Hudson, is significant: "The responsibility, then, as Massachusetts liquor laws have recently clarified, lies with one who allowed them to get drunk."

The Puranam of Muruka Nayanar

St. Murukar, a Brahmin by birth, belonged to Pukaloor. He was well-versed in the Vedas. St. Sekkizhar says: "He stood atop Wisdom's peak." His service was the gathering of flowers and leaves that could be offered in the Siva-pooja.

He would get up before the crack of dawn, bathe in the sacred flood and then fare forth to gather flowers, leaves and the like in various baskets. He knew which to choose and which to eschew. He would sit in a sacred and sequestered place and weave wreaths, chaplets, garlands, bouquets, leis and nosegays fit to adorn the person of the deity. His lips were always chanting the mystic pentad.

He was blessed with the honour of hosting St. Tirugnanasambandhar, St. Tirunilakanta Yazh-p-panar, St. Appar, and St. Sirutthondar. He gained his ascension at the wedding of St. Sambandhar.

The dacad of Tirugnanasambandhar on Tirupukaloor Varthamanicchuram sings the glory of St. Murukar.

We do not witness anything spectacular in his life. He pursued the noiseless tenor of his way in cheerful Godliness, ever enjoying that peace which surpasseth understanding.

The Puranam of Rudra Pasupati Nayanar

"Reverence to Your choler, O Rudra, and to Your barb,
reverence; reverence to Your bow, and reverence to both Your arms."

- Satarudriya Stotram

This is not a prayer offered to Rudra in fright or in fear. The wrath of the Lord is a benediction. As the Sivagnana Siddhyar says, the act of the Lord -- irrespective of its form --, is ever merciful and gracious.

"Rudra" says J.Bruce Long, "is the multiform deity par excellence." (Rudra As An Embodiment of Divine Ambivallence In The Satarudriya Stotram). The ambivalence of this deity has puzzled many. His multivalence is reflected in a multitudinous ways by means of attributes remarkable for their juxtaposed bipolarity.

It is in the Statarudriya Stotram we meet with the mystic pentad, for the first time. St. Sekkizhar appositely remarks: "Rudram (i.e. Satarudriya Stotram) is the fruit of the rare Vedas" (Aru marai-p-payanakiya urutthiram). The structuring of Rudram is significant. In the Vedas, it is centrally poised (Krishna Yajur Veda, Kanda 4, Prapataka 5-7).

Standing neck-deep in the cool water of a pellucid pool, our Nayanar, with hands folded above his head in adoration, chanted Sri Rudram and eventually gained at-one-ment with Siva.

The following observation of Bruce Long explains, in an intelligible language, the complexities inherent in Rudra: "Even as early as the time of the Satarudriya (ca. 1000 B.C.), Rudra's character is marked by a configuration of traits, powers and deeds that are, at once, antithetical and complementary. Though One in essence, he is identified as the divine power which both creates and destroys, energizes and dissolves all forms of life. His ambivalent nature made possible the multiplication of his manifestations (murtis), during the epic and post-epic periods, in such a way that he can appear to be either malevolent (ghora, bhairava) or benevolent (aghora, siva) on different occasions or both simultaneously."

The Puranam of Tiru-Nalai-p-Povar

"There is no Brahmin like unto Nandan in this fourfold world."

- Mahakavi Bharati.

St. Nandanar was by birth a harijan. In the not distant past, harijans had to live outside a village or town, in a slum which was truly a little hell. They were always in a state of abject misery. Even animals received a better treatment than these wretched people. Somehow they survived and even had their share of joy. St. Sekkizhar says:

"..... the (harijan) farmwives deck their hair
With sheaves of paddy, quaff toddy and dance for joy;
Drums then resound keeping time." (10)

Our Nayanar was born in Adanoor which today goes by the name Melanalloor, according to S.Sivapadasundaram, the author of "Sekkizhar Adicchuvattil." St. Nandanar can be described as one who was divine while he was but a foetus in his mother's womb. We believe that our Saint had hymned the praise of Siva, *en ventre sa mere*. He was an "announcer" and he proclaimed the ukases, edicts and the like by beat of tom-tom. He dealt with leather, straps, guts etc. For Siva-pooja he supplied cow's bezoar.

He was an untouchable who could not enter a temple. When love impelled him to have a darshan of the Lord of Tiru-p-Pungkoor, a miracle took place. St. Sekkizhar says:

".... the brow-eyed Lord
Of Pungkoor cinct with cloud-clapped forted walls
Commanded His martial Bull to step aside, and thus
Was he (Nandanar) blessed with His darshan, unobstructed." - 17.

Our saint dug a spacious tank for the shrine of Siva, which is still in use.

He longed to see the Lord of Tillai. He knew he was not entitled to enter the temple at Tillai. Yet whenever his longing became uncontrollable, he would think aloud thus: "Well, let me go tomorrow." This then accounts for his name: "Tiru-Nalai-p-Povar."

At last he did resolve to go. He reached the outskirts of Tillai. But then he thought of his base birth, felt scared, refused to move further and stood transfixed. When he came to, he would but go round and round the ineffably great limits of Tillai-city. His days were spent in circumambulation.

The gracious Lord of Tillai bade the Tillai-Brahmins to welcome our Saint into their midst and cause him bathe in a fire-pit to be made ready by the Brahmins. After his fire-bath when our Saint emerged out of the pit, he looked a great muni (sage). Our Saint, escorted by the Tillai Brahmins, came near the adytum. None saw him thereafter.

This, in short, is the Periya Puranam version of the life of our Saint. This however is no longer in vogue. Gopala Krishna Bharati (born towards the end of the 18th century) published his "Nandan Charitthiram" in 1861 with the help of a French official of Karaikkal. It is a book of *Kirthanas* and is a marvel of music. For decades its popularity was on the ascendant. Even Mahakavi Bharati has sung a few songs in imitation of Gopala Krishna Bharati. Sri Roja Mutthiah -- the guardian of old and rare books -- told us that Nandan Charithiram was printed by, as many as 150 publishers. Small wonder that this work still holds the field. The life of our Saint, as depicted in this work, is different, in many respects, from the Puranam of Thiru-Nalai-p-Povar. Though Nandan Charithiram mirrors the goings-on of the 18th or early 19th century Tamil Nadu, it is to be deemed merely as a story only. It is not hagiography at all. Gopala Krishna Bharati had caused history to sink to the level of story.

In his work "The Saiva Saints", its learned author has narrated a version in tune with the Nandan Charithiram and concludes thus: "Such is the story as narrated by Saint Sekkilar." The subsequent observations of the author no doubt attenuate the confusion.

Castes and sub-castes, it is said, are the bane of India. Maybe so. The annals of Bharath, however, attest to the fact that they never stood in the path of sainthood. The higher castes even to-day own, that they are but mustard seeds before the mountains of piety: St.Nandanar, St.Thirunilakanta Yazh-p-Panar and St.Tiru-p-Panazhvar.

The Puranam of St.Tiru-k-Kurippu-th-Tondar

This puranam is told in 128 stanzas. The first 110 stanzas sing the glory of Kanchipuram, the birth-place of our Saint. They contain a mine of information. Kanchi is as great as Kasi. It is a city of learned men. "Kanchi of boundless learning" (Kalviyil Karaiilatha Kanchi) are the words of St.Appar. It was here Adi Sankara Baghawat Pada established his Sarvanga Matam. The Saiva Siddhanta Adhinam at Kanchi is of considerable antiquity. It is said that the sacred mango tree (Ekampareswar Temple) is at least three millennia old. Kanchi is in Tondai Mandala and St.Sekkizhar is a Velala of this region. The Kanchi Puranam by Sivagnana Swamikal is a classic. Hiuen-Tsiang sojourned at Kanchi to learn many things.

Our Nayanar was a washerman by birth. He was an ardent Siva-bhakta. He served the servitors truly divining their wish. Hence his name Tiru-k-Kurippu-th-Tondar.

On a wintry day, an old and destitute tapaswi appeared before our Nayanar clothed in dirty rags. Our Nayanar offered to full his clothes clean. The tapswi said that they should be fulled and dried before sundown. To this condition our Nayanar agreed. He took no little time to full them.

Before he could dry them in the sun, it began to rain, on a sudden, cats and dogs. It rained ceaselessly. The sun was about to set. Ashamed of his inability to fulfil his promise, our Nayanar resolved to end his life by dashing his crown on a granite-stone. When his head was about to contact the hard and pitiless stone, God's own hand jutted out from its side and stayed his head. Pat upon the theophany, the ascension of the Nayanar took place.

Bishop Carlyle said:

"What worship, for example, is there not in mere washing!"

- Past and Present, Ch.15.

The Puranam of St. Chandesura Nayanar

St Chandesura Nayanar was hardly ten years old when he gained ascension. When he was five summers old, he mastered the Sivagamas, the Vedas and their six Angas. He was invested with the sacred thread when he was seven years old. It was only to honour the tradition that he was sent to the teachers of the Vedas. They were struck with wonder by the knowledge displayed by the boy-saint. For him, devotion to Lord Siva, became a sweet duty.

By the grace of Lord Siva, he took upon himself the duty of grazing the kine of the village. The cows began to rain milk even when none milked them. This then prompted him to perform Siva-pooja. He daily performed the ablutions of the Lord with milk. One day a tale-bearer chanced to witness this. He carried the news to the Brahmins of the village, who in turn complained to his father. The very next day, all unseen, his father followed him, and hiding himself in the branches of a tree, witnessed the Siva-pooja of his son. Then the father descended quick from the tree and began to belabour his son mercilessly with a stick. The boy-saint, oned as he was with Siva, was oblivious of the beating. He proceeded with the sacred ablutions. Mad with anger, the father kicked away the pot of milk. When the holy milk was thus spilt, our Nayanar decided to punish the desecrator. He took out a stick that lay nearby, and lo, the stick metamorphosed into an axe. With that he cut away the feet of his father. Down fell he. The boy-saint then proceeded with his pooja and brought it to a successful close. Lord Siva was pleased. With Uma, He appeared on His mount -- the Bull, before the boy-saint and said:

"For Our sake you felled down your own father;
We are your father henceforth".

The Lord also conferred on Vichara Sarma -- so was he named by his parents --, the office of Chandesa. Hence his name Chandesura Nayanar. He is even hailed as the Son of Siva.

It is to a divine office our Nayanar was appointed. This is also an estate, a beatitude. It is Chandesura who runs the temple. Acquisitions and alienations of property are made in the name of Chandesura only. The visit of any devotee to a temple becomes complete only when he comes to the sub-shrine of Chandesura with a prayer that he should be made eligible for the benefit of Siva-darshan, by the grace of Chandesura. It is the final place at which the devotee should arrive. Our Nayanar is entitled to half a circumambulation, and his shrine in every temple is so constructed.

St.Chandesura and St.Kannappar are the two Nayanmar who are celebrated by all the twelve Tirumurais. Indira V. Peterson highlighting this fact says: "Kannappar and Canticar, the two Nayanmars whom the Tevaram poets repeatedly invoke as exemplary atiyar, epitomize the unique blend of qualities that characterize the Tamil Saiva ideal: great concern for the proper performance of ritual worship, and a passionate, all-consuming personal love for God, before which all rules and laws of conduct and ceremony crumble." - Poems to Siva, page 46.

The Puranam of St.Tirunavukkarasar

St.Tirunavukkarasar is hailed by St.Sundarar as one who is poised in "Tiruninra-semmai". This phrase occurs in a hymn of St. Appar's which begins with the words: "Sivan enum osai..." Thiruninra-semmai is truly the Tao of Lao Tzu. Tao which meant originally the Way, is Reality, the ultimate, undefinable Reality. Tiruninra-semmai is the way of Life informed by Godliness. It was in this way our Saint was firmly established.

The name which he received from his parents was Marulneekkiyar (the remover of darkness/confusion). When he joined the Jains, he became Dharmasena. Such was his progress in Jainism that he came to be called eventually "Thangkalil melaya Dharmasenar" (Dharmasena par excellence). When he returned to his original faith he was christened "Navukkarasu" (Lord of Utterance) by Lord Siva Himself. Our Saint was hailed by St. Sambhandhar as Appar, the Father. These names historicize the odyssey of our Saint. If St.Tirugnanasambandhar represents the living faith of Saivism, St.Appar is to be understood as the Father of Saivism.

The Sanskrit equivalent of Tirunavukkarasu is Vagisa, not Jihvaraja as mentioned in Upamanyu Bhakta Vilasa. Our Saint is the Lord of Language, the language that takes one to the Lord of lords who is Siva. Repentance, contrition, humility, compassion, loving-kindness, egolessness: it is of these his poems are wrought.

He never forgave himself for his apostasy. He was a Jain for nearly four decades. He had spent a moiety of his life denigrating and ditching Saivism. He thought that he deserved perdition. However the Lord, in His infinite mercy, retrieved him from the bottomless pit and made him the

King of Uttarance to be hailed by all the seven worlds. This, for our Saint, was grace that surpassed understanding. He felt in his flesh and marrow that he did not merit this. He confessed this in his hymn beginning with the words: "Attha unadiyenai anbal arthai..."

Father by sheer love you drew me-your slave-, to You
  And bathed me in the flood of Your benign look;
You the infinitely rare, became easy of access to me;
  Pitying me, You claimed and blessed and accepted me.
Did You not forgive all my trespasses -- those
  Of a mad man, a fool, a ghoul and a dog?
Is all this for my sake? Alas, alas!
  Behold the blessed grace of Him -- my Lord!

The dictum of Suga Brahmam Ramaswami Sastrikal which says that the vainglorious for ever flaunt their trifling successes and the pious for ever remember their sins, is significant. Many of the heart-rending out-bursts of our Saint are surcharged with an intense pathos. "How have I wasted my time!" (Kalatthai-k-Kazhitthavare), "What can I, the deceptious one, do!" (Vanjanen en seikane), "Why, why was I born at all!" (en seivan tondrinane), "Can I survive, if I forget!" (Maranthu uyvano), "Woe unto me! How in the past have I -- the poor one --, dispraised the Lord! (Emman thannai yezhaiyen nan pandu ikazhnthavare) "How many, o how many were the days that I wasted, not praising the Lord of Pullirukkuvelur" (Pullirukkuveluranai-p-potrathe aatranal pokkinane): These are but a few instances. Our Saint was ever after intensifying his servitorship. He prayed to the Lord of Tillai thus: "Pray, do not befuddle me" (Chintaiyei tikaippiyathe). This is a significant prayer. The Lord clarifies the mind of the pious and hardens the heart of the evil-doer. The Bible says: "And the Lord hardened the heart of the Pharaoh..." (Exodus 9-12).

The hymns of our Saint bear eloquent testimony to the episodes relating to his life, as recorded by the Periya Puranam. The Lord afflicted our Saint with an acute colic to retrieve him from the fold of Jainism. This is referred to by him in Tani-th-Tiru-th-Tandakam, as follows: "He cured me -- the slave --, of colic and ruled me" (Soolai theertthu atkondare). It was Tilakavatiyar, the elder sister of our Saint, who was responsible for the retrieval of our Saint from the fold of Jainism. He therefore hails her as his mother, father and sister in his Tiruppathirippuliyur decad thus: "Eendralumai yenakku enthaiyumai utan tondrinarai...." (He wasted his time for about four decades in an alien faith.) No doubt, his life as a Jain was at once rigid and austere. He also practised non-attachment. However all these were but an exercise in futility. He led the life of the base, and according to our Saint, the base do not give up their baseness unless they suffer and their suffering becomes unendurable. These are referred to in his decad on Tirukkadavur Virattam. Thus does our Saint confess:

"I lived a life of non-attachment, irrigating the barren land;
My life illustrated the truth of the dictum that says:
'*The base improve not unless severely punished!*"

[Patrila vazhkkai vazhnthu pazhukke neer iraitthane
Utralar kayavar therar ennum katturaiyodu otthane].

Many were the ordeals to which he was put, by the Pallava King. He was thrown into a lime-kiln. He was administered poison. This is referred to in his decad on Tirunanipalli. Our saint sang thus:

"The Lord of Nanipalli transformed into ambrosia
The evil and envenomed dish of rice and milk
Which the unjust Jains gave me to eat"

[Vanjanai-p-pall sorakki Vazhakkila Amanar thantha Nanju amuthakkuvitthar Nanipalli adikalare].

An elephant was set on our Saint. This evil boomeranged. The tusker spared our Saint but did away with the Jains. Finally he was tethered to a stone-slab and thrown in the mid-sea. By the grace of Lord Siva the stone began to float and our Saint safely reached ashore. His hymn on Tiruneelakkudi celebrates this victory.

"When the Jains tied me to a slab of stone
And threw me into the abundant flood,
I came out alive by chanting the hallowed name
Of Lord Hara of Neelakkudi -- girt with long paddy-fields."

[Kallinodu enaippootti Amankaiyar
Ollai neer puka nookka envakkinal
Nellu neell vayal Neelakkudi Aran
Nalla namam navitri uynthane andre.]

When such miracles successively occurred in the life of our Saint, the Pallava King eventually shook himself away from the clutches of the Jains. He rued his conduct, adored our Saint, embraced Saivism, destroyed the pagodas of the Jains and built a temple for Lord Siva. This King was Mahendravarma who flourished between 580 and 630 A.D.

Repeated reading of the life of our Saint has driven us to the following conclusion. At some point of time, the ever-penitent Saint should have thought thus: "Should I do away with this body -- the one that was fostered by the food of the Jains for decades --, all at once, or am I to do it gradually (though utterly)? If I should continue to endure this wretched vesture, then it should be with the leave of the Lord." So when our poet came to the shrine at Pennakadam, he prayed to Lord Siva thus:

"I have a submission to place at Thy golden feet;
Be pleased to consider it: if Thou art pleased
To save my life and rid me of the loud saying
(That points to my nexus with the Jains),
O Lord Sudar-k-Kozhundu of Thoongkanai Maatam.
Of Kadanthai - girt with vaulting clouds,
Be pleased to inscribe on my person
The fulgurant, three-leaved trident."

[Ponnar tiruvadikku onru undu vinnappam potri seyyum
En aavi kappatharkku icchai undale irum Kootru akala
Minnarum moovilaiccholam en male pori mevu kondal
Thunnar Kadanthaiyul Thoongkanai Mata-ch-Cudar Kozhunde.]

Verses 3 to 9 of this decad are missing. In the envoi verse the saint prays for an inscribing on his person the bull-emblem too (Idapam pori).

While explaining the word Kootru which may mean death, the foot note at page 375 (Kasi Matam edition of Tirunavukkarasar Tevaram, 1957) says that it means "a saying" (which has reference to his past, Jain affinity). It is therefore clear that our Saint sought the approval of the Lord for *continuance of his life in a body that had, in the past, sinned against Lord* Siva. The sought-for insignia were imprinted on our Saint by a Siva-Bhoota. This favour was conferred on our Saint in utter secrecy and none else knew of it.

From Pennakadam he proceeded to Aratturai, Muthu Kunram and other holy places. Eventually he arrived at Tillai, a darshan of whose Lord confers fulfilment of one's birth on earth. From Tillai our Saint proceeded to Tiruvetkalam, thence to Tirukkazhippalai and then back to Tillai. It was during this time he heard about the boy-saint Tirugnanasambandhar. He was fired by a penchant to adore the flower-feet of the godly child. He reached Seerkazhi via Tirunaraiyur. Hearing of the arrival of our Saint, St.Sambandhar left his house to receive him. Then took place the historic meeting. As our Saint fell at the feet of the divine child, the latter took hold of the hands of the aged saint with his flower-hands -- indescribably great --, hailed him and addressed him as "Appar" (Father). "The lips that called him Appar were the self-same lips which drew unto them the Lord mounted on the Bull, by a cry." (Vidaiyinmale Varuvar Thammai azhuthu azhaitthukkondavar tham "Appare" ena...) When thus addressed, our Saint, in utter humility, answered thus: "(I am) Your servitor".

For St.Sambandhar our Saint was FATHER. However, our Saint never claimed the privileges of a father. He for ever behaved as a servitor. Only once did St.Appar address St.Sambandhar as a child. This was the outcome of uncontrollable anxiety he felt for the safety of the child-saint. When the boy-saint decided to proceed alone to Madurai to confront the Jains,

our Saint, who knew all about their machination and deviltry, burst out thus: "O child! There is no limit to the deception of those Jains! (Pillaai! Antha Amankaiyar Vanjanaikkor avathi illai....).

St.Appar, according to Nambi Andar Nambi, had composed in all 4,900 decads (yezhu yezhu nooru irum panuval pakarum makaviyogi). However only 392 decads are to-day extant. These sing of 125 shrines. The singular greatness of our Saint lies in the fact that he had visited all the shrines about which he had sung. St Sambandhar had sung of Indiraneelaparuppatam, Kedaram, Kedeeccharam, Gokarnam, Konamalai and Sri Sailam which he did not visit in person. So too Sundarar who had not visited Kedeeccharam, Sri Sailam and Kedaram, had sung about these shrines.

St.Appar went on foot from shrine to shrine. He had on many occasions travelled alone. After his first meeting with the boy-saint he visited the shrines at Seerkazhi and Kolakka in his company. While at Seerkazhi our Saint stayed with the godly child in the latter's house for a number of days and dined with him. It is thus referred to by St.Sekkizhar:" Pillaiyar tham tiru matatthil ezhundu aruli amuthu seythu..." Matam is a word which also refers to the house of a holy person. [Vide ILR Madras, p.103 and 1952 (1) M L J, p. 557].

Taking leave of the boy-saint, our saint visited Tirukkaruppariyalur, Tiruppungkur, Tirunidur, Tirukkurukkai, Thiruninriyur, Thirunanipalli and other places. Thereafter his pilgrimage was along both the banks of the Cauvery. He worshipped at Tirucchemponpalli, Tiruvethirkolpadi, Tirukkodika, Tiruvavaduthurai, Tiruvidaimaruthur, Tirunakeswaram, Tiruppazhayarai and Tirucchathimutram. It was at the last mentioned place, he prayed to Lord Siva that He be pleased to grant him "Tiruvadi-Diksha." The Lord bade him to come unto Tirunalloor where the beatitude sought by him was conferred on Him. The decad containing the words: "Nanainthanaiya Tiruvadi en thalaimel vaitthar" celebrates this event. In spite of the imprinting of the Saivite emblems on his person at Thoongkanai Maatam, our Saint was not happy with his body which was sustained by the food of the Jains for decades. He ached for the godly touch, prayed for it and obtained it. He sojourned at Tirunalloor for some days. From here he visited places like Aavoor and Palaitthurai. However, he would return to Nalloor to abide there.

Then taking leave of the Lord of Nalloor he visited Tiruppazhanam and thence moved to Tingkaloor where, till then unknown to our Saint, abode St.Appoothi -- a true chela of our Saint. It was here he resuscitated the moribund son of St.Appoothi. Perhaps, it was a resurrection.

Our Saint's love for St.Appoothi was without bounds. In a verse of sublime style he praised St.Appoothi. "Nataimanacchirappitthu" are the words of St.Sekkizhar. Our Saint abode at Tiruppazhanam for many days.

From there he could have visited Thiruvaiyaru which was only three miles away. However he did not visit it. It was the will of the Lord of Thiruvaiyaru, as is affirmed by Panditha Vidwan T.V.Gopala Ayyar, that our Saint should reach Thiruvaiyaru, not on foot, but in a mirific way. From Pazhanam our Saint returned to Nalloor. After some days he left for Tiruvaroor via Pazhaiyarai, Valanjuzhi, Kumbhakonam, Naloor, Tirucॅcherai, Kudavayil, Tirunaraiyoor, Tiruvanjiyam, Peruvelur and Tiruvilamar. Of the many decades he sang on Poongkoyil at Tiruvaroor, as many as 21 decades are extant.

Twentyfive are the Siva moortas (iconographical representations). Lord Thiagaraja is not to be numbered among these. "Aiainjin *appuratthan*" are the words of our Saint.

Ten adages are referred to in a decade on Tiruvaroor. These are aphorisms, not apophthegms, and are apodeictic. The first of these condemns the immature preference of man. Mellow wisdom is to be preferred, not raw knowledge. Our Saint condemns himself for having preferred the green one to a ripe fruit. "Kani irukkak Kaai Kavarntha" are the words of our Saint. "Kani iruppak Kai Kavarntha" are the words of Tiruvalluvar.

The man who is after meat will not chase a corbie when he can easily hunt a hare. It is folly to forsake a hare for a crow. This adage which is referred to by our Saint is also quoted by St.Tirumangkai Azhwar in his "Siriya Tirumadal."

Like the Bible our Saint affirms that the Lord is the Way. "Sel saarvum aanan" are his words.

Tiruvaroor was a city where flourished the practitioners of manifold Saivism. This is referred to by our Saint in a verse beginning with the words: "Arumanitthadam."

Our Saint was for ever meditating on the Lord with a view to envision him. "Kandale karutthai ninainthirunthane" are the words of our Saint. This *kandal* has nothing to do with logic. It is not "Pratyaksha" as is opined by a writer on our Saint.

The decad of our Saint on the Adirai-Festival at Aroor in Kurinji-p-pann, is extraordinarily mellifluent. According to our Saint, Maha-vritins -- the wearers of garlands wrought of white skulls --, (Venntalai maalai Virathikal) participated in this festival. Actually, this decad on the Adirai-Festival of Aroor, according to St.Sekkizhar, was sung by our Saint at Tiruppukaloor, at the request of the boy-saint, the very son of Lord Siva (Sevil tikazhnthavar maintharana Tirugnanasambandhar).

Whenever our Saint thought on his days of apostasy he was besieged by immense remorse. One of the verses on Aroor runs thus:

With the body in which life abides, for the post,
  The heart, for the water-bowl
And misery, for the horizontal beam,
  Holding the pole of sorrow
I plied the shadoof: the crops were not fed;
  In vain did I bale out water and stand
Fatigued by the Five (senses), Oh Lord
  Of Aroor Moolattam!

The hymn beginning with the words: Ayiram thingkal" is the Purusha - Sukta in a nut-shell.

In a decad dedicated to the glory of servitorship, our Saint carries a tirade against the Jains. Such attacks by our Saint are few and far between.

In one of the verses our Saint pays homage to St.Nami Nandi. "Nami Nandi Neeral tiruvilakkittamai neell nadu ariyumanre" are the words of our Saint. Nami Nandi Nayanar is referred to thrice in this decad. It appears to us, that one of the commandments of our Saint makes it mandatory for us to emulate Kungkuliyakkalaya Nayanar, for our Saint says: "For ever burn the incense of kungkuliyam" (Kungkuliyappukai koottu enrum).

In one of the verses -- not easy of explication --, our Saint gratefully hails the Lord of Aroor who had gifted to our Saint, at his hour of crisis, his elder sister -- truly a mother.

"Ammai yaar enakku enru enru aratrinerkku
Ammaaiyarai-th-thanthar Aroor Ayyare."

Our Saint was a gift of Tilakavatiyar to Saivism. He owed to her everything even as we owe everything to him.

Our Saint deemed himself to be a bonded slave of Lord Siva. This is referred to in one of his Tandaka-hymns on Aroor. "Avantthal ennai aandu kondan kaann" are the words of our Saint.

The Odyssey of the soul and its ultimate achievement of the "Thadalai - Beatitude" (the Siddhanta Advaitic union) is thus portrayed by our Saint in the following hymn:

First, she heard of His name;
  Then of His form and poise she heard;
Of His Aroor she heard next;
  She grew mad of Him thereafter;
That very day, she forsook
  Her mother as well as father
And quit the mores and modes of the worldly;

She became oblivious of herself;
She lost her name and entity;
Thus, even thus, was she with the Lord's feet oned.

The Bible (Revelation 22:13) says: "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last." Our Saint says: "Aanatthu mun ezhutthai ninrar polum."

At his birth our Saint was christened "Marulneekiyar." However for a time he was held by the spell of marul (darkness). It was the Lord who dispelled his murk. So our Saint hailed Him thus: "Cintai marul neekkinaan kaann."

Our Saint always insisted upon service, manual service to the Lord and His shrine. He was ever to be seen with his uzhavaram. Thus did he admonish mankind:

If you are after salvation, oh heart,
Come here; every day, ere break of day,
Enter our Lord's temple; sweep its premises
And coat them with the dung of cow;
Weave garlands of flowers and words;
Hail Him and hymn His praise;
Adore Him with your head; perform a dance too,
And cry aloud thus, even thus:
"Hail Sankara, all hail Sankara!
O Lord of Aroor!
O Our Alpha in whose ruddy crest
Doth rest the billowy flood!"

When our Saint forsook his faith in Jainism and rejoined Saivism, he was persecuted. He was sought to the murdered. He was thrown into a lime-kiln; he was administered poison; an elephant was set on him and finally he was tied to a stone-slab and thrown into the sea. It was Lord Siva who saved him. In grateful acknowledgement, he records this, thus: "Saavame katthennai aandai potri."

Two of the decads that our Saint sang on Tiruvaroor-Araneri are extant. It was here St. Nami Nandi performed his service of lighting lamps for the shrine of the Lord. Our Saint refers to St.Naminandi in one of the verses.

At Tiruppukaloor, our Saint abode with St.Murukanar. From Pukaloor he visited Tirucchengkattangkudi, Nallaru, Satthamangkai, Tirumarukal and other places. The boy-saint later joined our Saint. While they sojourned at Pukaloor, St.Sirutthondar and St.Nilanakkar called on them and stayed with them for a few days.

Taking leave of them, our Saint and the boy-saint continued their pilgrimage. They visited Tiruambar and then came to Tirukkadavur where they abode with St.Kungkuliya-k-Kalayanar. Eventually they arrived at Tiruveezhimizhalai via Kadavur Mayanam and Aakkoor.

When they sojourned at Tiruveezhimizhalai, each in a different matam with his servitors, a famine swept the country. By the grace of Siva, each was to receive daily a gold coin. The coin received by our Saint was of superior touch. The Lord rewarded him thus for his manual service. The boy-saint appealed to the lord to bless him even as He blessed our Saint. The Lord thereupon granted him his prayer. After a time, it began to rain and the famine ended. The saints were again on their pilgrimage. Eventually they came to Tirumaraikkadu. In the past the Vedas themselves adored the Lord of this city and the doorway through which they had their ingress and egress was kept closed by them. Worshippers had to go through a different doorway. The boy-saint wanted our Saint to sing open this doorway. Our Saint began to hymn the decad beginning with the words: "Panninn ner mozhiyall..." The doors opened not. In his envoi verse our Saint addressed the Lord as lacking in mercy (Irakkam onrileer). Then the doors opened. At this the saints and the servitors rejoiced. They went in, hymned the Lord and came out. Our Saint requested the boy-saint to shut the doors by his hymn. Even as St.Sambandhar sang the first verse, the doors were closed shut.

This episode makes it plain that these two saints were no ordinary mortals and that they were the very Vedas in human form. Back in the matam our Saint mused over the cunctation in the opening of the doors and the celerity of their closure. Fear possessed him when he thought that he did not divine properly the will of the Lord. He went to a sequestered part of the matam and there fell asleep. The Lord appeared to him in his somnium, showed him His form and bade him to follow Him to Tiruvaimoor. At this he woke up and hymned thus:

"Questing after me he came where I was
And revealed to me His marks of identity;
The Opulent One of Tiruvaimoor which is
Girt with groves of coconut trees, said:
"Come thither" and moved away;
What may this be?"

He went after Him for a long time. On a sudden He disappeared into a temple that was there. By now the boy-saint had also arrived there. At his advent, our Saint sang thus:

"Yonder stands he who sang the door shut;
In articulating chaste Tamil, he is more
Valiant than I who sang the door open; can the Lord

Of Tiruvaimoor still conceal Himself? Ha, He is
Truly mad -- the One whose ruddy hair sports the crescent."

The Lord then, revealed Himself to the boy-saint who showed Him to our Saint. The two saints sojourned at Tiruvaimoor and then returned to Vedaranyam.

From there the boy-saint departed for Pandya Nadu. St.Appar, after sometime, left the place and came to Nakaippattinam. From there he proceeded to Veezhimizhalai and thence to Tiruvavaduthurai. Here he hailed the Lord for His gift of a purse of one thousand sovereigns to the boy-saint. He left for Pazhaiyarai, and when he arrived at this place he found out that the Jains had, by deception, concealed the shrine of Vada-thali. Our Saint staged a satyagraha and saw to it that the Jains were driven away from the shrine. (For further details, read: "A Note on the Temples of Pazhayarai", Journal of the International Institute of Saiva Siddhanta, Vol.1, No.1, 1985).

From Pazhayarai our Saint proceeded to Tiruvanaikka, Yerumbiyoor, Tiruchirappalli, Karkudi, Tirupparaitthurai and Tiru-p-Paigngneeli. Near to the last-mentioned place, Lord Siva greeted our Saint in the guise of a Brahmin. A pond was made ready to slake the thirst of our Saint by Siva who also offered to him packed food to appease his hunger. The Brahmin accompanied our Saint to Paigngneeli and, on a sudden, disappeared.

From Paigngneeli our Saint left for Tiruvannamalai, Tiruvotthoor and Kanchi. Then via Kazhukkunru, Tiruvanmiyoor, Mylapore, Otriyoor, Paasur, Tiruvalangkadu and Karikkarai he reached Tirukkalatthi. He was possessed by a desire to have a *darshan* of Lord Siva as He is enshrined in Kailas. He thereupon undertook the well-nigh impossible and extremely hazardous pilgrimage to Kailas. He came to Srisailam which he hymned in song and solemn strain. He crossed the states of Andhra and Kannada and reached Malavam. He proceeded to Lada Desa whence he came to Madhya Paitiram. Eventually, he arrived at Kasi. He bade his followers to tarry at Kasi and proceeded alone to Kailas. Innumerable and unendurable were the hardships he underwent in his journey. His limbs wasted away. He had punished beyond endurance, his body that was once sustained by the food of the Jains. He lay on the way a mere bag of bones, bereft of even an ounce of strength. Siva appeared before him in the guise of a muni and dissuaded him from proceeding further. Our Saint then affirmed thus: "I'll not go back with this body that is destined to perish." His object was to kill the body that abode with the Jains for decades. It was fulfilled by Lord Siva. "Rise oh lofty Navukkarasu" said the Muni, and our Saint rose up with an unflawed, athanasic body that glowed with lustre. It was thus our Saint came to possess the God-given *Pranava-sarira*. He was commanded by the Lord to bathe in a *poikai* (tank, not excavated by human hand) and our Saint did so. When he rose up, it was not from a tank in the Himalayas but from

one at Tiruvaiyaru. It was thus he arrived at Tiruvaiyaru without leaving foot-prints *(yathum suvadu padamal)*. Henceforth, the soles of his feet would leave no foot-prints at all, for his was a *Pranava-sariram*. When the child-saint was engaged in vanquishing a body of Jains, 8000 strong, our Saint was engaged in vanquishing his Samana-fed body. As a Jain, our Saint was the greatest of Jains, and 80,000 of them could not match his glory. The routing of Jainism was complete with the annihilation of our Saint's body, once fostered by the Jains.

Our Saint chose Tiru-p-Poonthurutthi as his place of residence. He built there a *matam* which was ever bathed in the rays of the moon or the sun *(Thingkalum Gnayirum thoyum tirumatam angku onru seithar)*. Having vanquished the Jains and reconverted the Pandya to Saivism, the child-saint left Madurai and proceeded to Tiru-p-Poonthurutthi to get soused in the loving-kindness of our Saint. Our Saint, over the years, longed to serve the boy-saint, as one of his palanquin-bearers, though for a while. Never could he get an opportunity to serve so. With his Pranava-sarira, he could now move about at will, unimpeded. Whilst the boy-saint was borne in his pearly palanquin to Poonthurutthi, followed and preceded by a myriad servitors, our Saint, unnoticed by any, joined the litter-bearers, happy in the achievement of his long-nourished desire. That very moment the boy-saint experienced a divine shock and burst out: "Where is Appar?" *(Engkutrar Appar)*. Our Saint, thereupon, answered thus: "I, your servitor, blessed with the grand beatitude of bearing your feet, am here" *(Adiyane um adikal thangki varum peru vazhvu vanthu eithappetru ingku vutrane)*. With the speed of a lightning, the child-saint jumped out of the litter, with his heart atremble, and adored our Saint. Before he would adore him, our Saint hastened to hail him. The two abode at Poonthurutthi in godly splendour. Pat upon the departure of the boy-saint, our Saint left for Madurai via Tirupputthoor. He sojourned with the King, the queen and the minister St.Kulacchiraiyar. He then visited Tiruppoovanam and Rameswaram. From there he proceeded to Nelveli, Kanapper and other shrines. To spend the last days of his earthly existence, he arrived at Pukaloor, eventually. Lord Indra put him to test. Gems and gem-like damsels of Paradise were offered to him. These he rejected with a wave of his hand. He spent his time in divine service. On a day of *Sathayam* (the 24th lunar asterism) in *Chitrai*, he hymned a decad which has for its refrain: *Unnadikke pothukinren* (I am coming to Your feet), and became oned with Lord Siva.

Of the *Tevaram* Trio, our Saint is justly celebrated for his *soulabyam*, accessibility. His beckoning intimacy has about it an irresistible charm. A benign tenderness informs every word of his utterance. Our Saint was a polyglot. He was well-versed in Sanskrit, Prakrith, Pali and Tamil. Though the general drift of his language is intelligible, he baffles us by his exotic vocables. He was a scholar of extraordinary eminence. He was a past-master of the sixtyfour arts. The articles on *Tevaram*, in particular on our Saint's *Tevaram* by E.N.Thanikachala Mudaliar in Kala Nilayam (Ed. T.N.Sesha-

chalam) between 1928 and 1934 contain a mine of valuable information relating to our Saint. St.Appar was not a Brahmin by birth. However his knowledge of the *Vedas*, the *Agamas*, the 18 Puranas -- in particular the ten Saiva *Puranas* --, the *itihasas* and the srutis, is unique. The nexus between our Saint's *Tevaram* and the *Linga Purana* was brought out for the first time by Dr.R.Nagaswamy in his article: "*Vyapohana-stava* In Relation To Siva Temple" (Bharati, No.17, 1987-88, Banaras Hindu University, pp.36-42). Pages 200 to 203 of Dr.R.Nagaswamy's *Siva-Bhakti* (1989) also contain very useful information.

The *Vyapohana stotra*, says Dr.R.Nagaswamy, "forming part of the Linga *Purana*, is of very great significance for a deeper understanding of the philosophy and lay-out of classical temples of India." Our Saint, in a *Tandaka* hymn on Tirunaraiyoor, refers to Lord Siva as the content of *Linga Purana (Linga Puranatthu ullanai)*. Our Saint is also the author of a decad called *Linga Purana-k-Kurnthokai*.

The *Vyapohana stotra* deals with Lord Siva in His multifoliate manifestations. *Para-Siva*, *Nishkala-Siva*, *Sadasiva*, *Manonmani*, *Nandi*, *Mahakala*, *Ganesa*, *Bhrngi*, *Skanda*, *Caranas*, *Siddhas*, *Yakshas*, *Kinnaras*, *Vidhyataras*, *Asuras*, *Garudas*, *Rishis*, manifestations of the Magna Mater, danseuses of Paradise, *Vrashaba*, the cluster of divine kine, *Sasta*, *Virabhadra*, *Jyeshta* and others are described in a hierarchical order. Almost all these are mentioned in the hymns of our Saint.

In a verse on Tiruvaiyaru, this is what our Saint says: "*Angkangke Siva maki ninrar thame.*" Obviously this refers to the multitudinous manifestations of Lord Siva. The specific reference to Siva as Sivamurti (Tiruvaiyaru *Tevaram)* is therefore significant. Nishkala Siva is referred to as an *Aruvan* in the verse beginning with the words: "*Aruvanai atthi eeruri porthu...*" Sadasiva is referred to in the *Tiru-th-thandaka* verse beginning with the words: "*Karpoli tholl....*"

Manonmani is referred to in the *Kuruntokai* verse beginning with the words: "*Yeyilanai en icchai...*" Siva is referred to as the Motherless One who gave birth to Manonmani *(Manonmaniyerippetra thayilanai)*.

Both *Nandi* and *Mahakala* are referred to in the verse beginning with the words: "*Munthi Vanorkal....*" Ganesa (Ganapati) is referred to in many of the verses as *Anaimukhan*, *Vinayakan*, *Vigna Vinayakan*, *Vezha Mukhatthavan* and *Ganapati*. Murukan is referred to as *Kandan*, *Ceyndan*, *Kadampan*, *Arumukhan* and also by other names. Space forbids us from expatiating further.

St.Appoot.i, St.Amarniti, St.Kanampullar, St.Kannappar, St.Sengkatchozha, St.Chandisura, St.Sakkiya, St.Tirugnanasambandhar and St.Naminandi are the Nayanmar sung by our poet.

Right perception of Reality, mutability of the world's nature, service to Siva and His servitors, the fourfold path of *sariyai, kiriyai, yoga* and gnanam, the performance of the quotidian rites, the *tattvas*, the mystic pentad, grace and the bliss of release are some of the themes on which our Saint has eloquently descanted. We conclude our note with a translation of a *Tandaka* hymn of our Saint on Sivapuram.

He is the ethereal One who is superior to the heavenly ones;
  He is the Sanskrit of the North, the Tamil of the South
And the four Vedas; *pancha-kavya* is the stuff
  Of His ablutions; He is the Lord; He is a forester who dances
With fire in His hand; He graced the forester (Kannappar);
  He is the honey that percolates in the hearts
Of those who contemplate Him; He is the rich One;
  He is Siva, the opulent One of Sivapuram.

St. Kulacchiraiyar

St.Sundarar hails our Saint as "Peru Nambi" -- the great gentleman. He was the chief-minister of Nedumaran, also a canonised saint. Our Saint's native place is Manamelkudi, a coastal town. St.Sekkizhar says that he was ineffably glorious *(sepparum seer)*. He was firmly poised in servitorship. He was very devoted to the devotees of Lord Siva. His taper burnt hospitably even for an outcast provided the latter was devoted to Siva. Evildoers and miscreants too were entertained by him, if only these happened to be the worshippers of Siva. When the Pandya country went Jain, he was the only man who openly adhered to Saivism. He acted as the sole prop to the Pandya Queen -- the wife of a Jain monarch --, in her hour of spiritual crisis.

Of our Saint, St.Sambandhar sang thus:
"Kulacchirai that bows in sheer goodness
  Before the servitors, when he beholds them,
Whether they come in groups or singly"

[Kanangkalai varinum thamiyarai varinum adiyavar thangkalaik kandal, Gunangkodu paniyum Kulacchirai]. This idea is conveyed by St.Sekkizhar thus: *"Panbu mikkar palarai anaiyinum... oruvar anaiyinum...."* St.Sambandhar hails our Saint and the Pandya Queen in alternate verses in a decad on Tiruaalavai.

Though twice defeated, when the Jains suggested a third ordeal, it was our Saint who forced the issue. He demanded: "What may the wager be?" The obstinate 8,000 staked their very lives. It was thus our Saint caused the 8,000 to wager their lives away. He was so sure of the success of the boy-child that even before the commencement of the ordeal, he had ordered for the manufacture of 8,000 *kazhus*. Such was his faith in Siva and His servitors.

The word minister also means: 'one who administers or proffers, in service or kindness'. Our Saint -- the chief-minister of the Pandya, was every inch a minister and his ministry merits recordation in letters of diamond on leaves of gold.

St. Perumizhalai-k-Kurumpar

Our Saint belonged to Perumizhalai. Obviously this is not the same as Tiruveezhimizhalai. Perumizhalai, it is said, is near Pudukkottai. Half a mile from Peraiyoor is Devamalai which houses a cave-temple. Here is a sculpted icon of a yogi and this is said to be that of our Saint. Gazetteer of India (Pudukkottai District) refers to Idangkazhi Nayanar, but not to our Saint.

Our Saint was a Siva-yogi. He was a chela of St. Sundarar. Our Saint would render unbidden, such service as was needed, to all servitors of Siva. He fed the devotees of Siva without stint. He knew what servitorship meant, and performed it with enthusiasm. He chanted for ever the name of St. Sundarar, and thanks to this, he came by the *ashta-ma-siddhis*.

When St.Sundarar offered his hymns to the Lord of Anjaikkalam, preparatory to his ascension, our Saint who was hundreds of miles away from St.Sundarar, came to know of it. On the next day St.Sundarar was to gain ascension. Our saint resolved thus: "I will not live, parted from him, like those who still continue to live having lost the very pupils of their eyes. I will, by yoga, attain the feet of Siva, this day itself." His inner sensorium became single-pointed. Pure consciousness began to stream in his system. The Brahmarantra opened and his spirit moved out and coursed its way to Kailas. Thus he attained the bliss of release even before his guru could come by it, thanks of course, to the grace of his guru.

St. Peyar

One can understand an Andal, a Mira, a Nappinnai; but one cannot think of a woman-devotee who even distantly resembles Peyar -- more popularly known as Karaikkal Ammaiyar. Our Saint flourished a millennium and half ago; perhaps two millennia ago. The world, however, is yet to behold a second Peyar. The life of our Saint is the one and only exemplum offered by Hagiography. A careful reading of Women Saints of East And West, (Ramakrishna Vedanta Centre, London - 1955) will bear eloquent testimony to our dicta, mentioned supra.

Mahakavi Bharati, in his article entitled: "The Place of Woman" (Essays And Other Prose Fragments) says as follows: "There is a saying in Sanskrit: "*Grihini Griham uchyate*' (Home is but a synonym for wife)." The word *Grihini* (wife) is of feminine gender. Its counterpart in masculine gender is not to be found in the Sanskrit language. The Tamil equivalent of *Grihini* is

illall and the Tamil language is bereft of a word to indicate its counterpart in the masculine gender.

The name given to our Saint by her parents, was Punitavati (the holy one). She grew into an extraordinarily beautiful lass. She was married to one Paramadattan. Now that Punitavati had become an *illall*, St.Sekkizhar was bent upon coining words to parallel the Tamil word *illall*. By contributing three words, namely, *illalan*, *manaippati* and il *iraivan*, St.Sekkizhar had enriched the Tamil Vocabulary.

Our Saint belonged to the wealthy merchant clan. When servitors of Siva came to her house, she fed them and gave them gold and gems. Her domestic life was full of pure joy. One day some men called on her husband in his place of business and gave him a couple of mangoes. He sent these to his wife. A few minutes later, a devotee of Siva, with a view to get fed, called on her. She received him in the proper way. As she had not by then completed her cooking, she could not serve the guest with any side-dish. However she provided him with a mango fruit. The devotee-guest ate well, thanked her profusely and took leave of her. After sometime, her husband returned from his place of business to have his mid-day meal. He finished his bath and sat for his lunch. He had his square meal along with the remaining mango fruit. As the fruit was extremely toothsome, he said: "There should be one more; serve me that also." She moved away as if to fetch the fruit. She fervently prayed to Siva, and came by a fruit forthwith. She served it joyously to her husband. When he ate it he found out that it was a fruit the like of which could not be secured in all the three worlds. So he asked her: "Whence did you get this?" She was now in a dilemma. Favours of God to a devotee are not to be divulged. They are a solemn secret. Yet she had to give a true account of what took place, to her husband. It was her duty to do so. After a brief thinking which took place in solemn agony, she gave a true account of the happening. The merchant who was familiar with the weights and measures of the phenomenal world, could by no means, reckon the value of God's grace. He had his own misgiving. To get cleared of his misdoubt, he told her to secure one more fruit in the same fashion. Who could ever imagine the angst and agony of the young housewife? "O God, if You do not grant me one more fruit, my word would turn false!" This aside was articulated by her after a brief but intense and perfervid prayer. Behold, there in her palm was a mango fruit. The merchant, struck with wonder, received it. He but held it for a second, for it disappeared that very moment. St.Sekkizhar says: "The merchant could not then see the mango fruit which his hand held" *(Vanikanum tan kai-p-pukka mangkani pinnai-k-kanan)*. He is not referred to any longer as *illalan*, *manaippati*, *il iraivan* or *kanavan;* he is referred to as a merchant, a trader in worldly things and thingumajigs. He thought that she was a goddess -- and so would not treat her as his consort. Though he lived with her, there was no consortium betwixt them. On the pretext of going on a voyage he left her. He reached a sea-port of the Pandya realm, settled

there and had a flourishing business. He married for a second time, begot a daughter and named the child after his first wife. When news of his permanent stay at this town reached the kith and kin of Punitavatiyar, they decided to take her thither. She was taken in a litter to her husband's town. When he heard about this, with his wife and child he came to the outskirts of his town, and bowing low before her, said: "I flourish by your grace; this tender babe is named after you." This said, he fell at her feet. Our Saint shuddered and moved away. To the relations who questioned about his strange behaviour, he said: "Her Worship is no human being; she is a great and goodly deity." As all others stood dumbfounded, our Saint prayed to Lord Siva thus: "Let my beauty and flesh which I bore for him perish; let me come by a *pey's* form to hail You." Lo, she became a skeletal ghoul, adored by all the worlds. Gnosis was now hers. That very moment she hailed the Lord in anaphoretic verses. This hymn bears the name *Arputa-th-Tiruvantati.* She also sang *Yirettai Malai Antati.* She then became possessed of a desire to have a darshan of Lord Siva at Kailas. With inconceivable speed she fled northwards till she arrived at the foothill. She then thought that it was not right with her to tread the holy ascent. She therefore measured the distance with her head. This then, perhaps, explains as to why the Lord dissuaded St.Appar to refrain from proceeding beyond a particular point in the Holy Mountain. The *Asuddha-Maya-Kariya* body can never traverse the holy ascent.

Beholding our Saint covering the ascent thus, Goddess Uma asked Her Consort thus: "What may this be? Here comes a gaunt, fleshless skeleton, energised by true love!" Lord Siva said: "Behold her, Uma! She is the Mother that fosters Us (by her devotion and dedication). She sought and obtained this praise-worthy form." When Lord Siva called her Mother," she, saying "Father", fell at His roseate and golden feet.

When Lord Siva said: "What boon do you seek of me?" she adored Him and said: "It is love, love for You, I seek; I will fain be born on earth no more; but should I get born, I should not, in any form, at any time, forget You; again when You dance Your mystic dance, beneath Your feet and in sheer rapture, let me stand and sing Your praise." Her wish was granted. The dancing and singing -- both everlasting -- are taking place at Tiruvalangkadu. It was here our Mother sang the two decads called: *Tiruvalangkattu Moottha Tiruppatikam*. It opens thus:

"The breasts have dried up; the nerves are bulging;
  Sunk are the eyes and hollow is the maw;
Ruddy are the gums in the two rows of teeth;
  Two white teeth are jutting out;
Long are the raised ankles; thus, even thus
  Is she -- a ghost! In the withered wood
She abides, screaming.
  In that wilderness of a forest

With His flowing matted hair wafting
In all the eight directions, He -- our Father --,
Carrying in His cool body the fire,
Dances! Behold Tiruvalangkadu!"

Our Saint is for us, the Holy Ghost.

Ammai-Appar is the deity of Tamil Saivism. For us, the Tamil Saivites, Ammai is St.Karaikkal Ammai and Appar is St.Appar.

St. Appoothi Adikal

The Tiruvuntiyar, chronologically speaking, is the first of the fourteen Siddhanta Sastras. The very first verse of this work affirms thus:

"Unbodied and unknown to any is That Ens;
It came embodied, *unti para!*
It gave of its own accord, *unti para!"*

This verse speaks of the formless God who assumes a body, on purpose. What may the purpose be? It is conferment of grace on a fully qualified soul. A soul is said to be fully qualified when it reaches the state of *iruvinai-oppu*. This may roughly be described as the balancing of good and the bad deeds. This does not at all mean, that the good and the bad deeds of the person concerned weigh equally. It means, he has no deeds to his credit or discredit. His Spiritual Profit and Loss Account is clean. No entry mars it on either side. For all his deeds or doings, he is deemed deedless. He is hereafter free from the taint of *doership*. (Vide pp.38-39, *Pati-Pasu-Pasam*, IISSR, 1988).

Before him who has attained *iruvinai-oppu*, God himself appears as a human being. This advent of God is called Satti-Nipatam (the descent of Sakti). Sometimes the conferment of grace may be done through a human *guru* energised by God. So, in *Vedantam* as well as *Siddhantam*, the *guru* is adored as Lord Siva Himself. The disciple need not spend his time in search of a *guru*. All that he should do is to qualify himself.

St.Appoothi had heard about St.Appar, but had not seen him in person. He never felt any need to go in search of St.Appar. For our Saint, St.Appar was the *guru*. He lived to glorify and magnify his *guru*. Eventually he was blessed by his *guru* who came in search of the *chela*. The truth of the first verse of the Tiruvuntiyar is radiantly illustrated by the life of our Saint.

Our Saint totally dedicated his life for the magnification of St.Appar. He did all his righteous acts -- many and varied were they --, in the name of St.Appar. Our Saint for ever wanted to chant the hallowed name of his *guru*; so he named all his belongings, including his children, after his *guru*. The life of our Saint demonstrates the truth of the dictum that there

is no *mantra* greater than the *guru's* sacred name. Our Saint's life therefore was one continuous and unbroken *Nama Japam.*

A snake bit his son and his life was ebbing away. However neither he nor his wife was daunted by this catastrophe. They were bent upon feasting St.Appar, drawing as it were, an iron-curtain on the dire event. Such dedication and devotion to the guru surpasseth understanding. Even the guru was taken aback when he came to know of the calamity and the anxiety of the divine couple to screen it. *"Nanru neer purintha vannam; yavar itthanmai seivar"* said St.Appar and rose up to revive the boy, by the grace of Lord Siva. St.Appar hymned a divine decad and the boy was made whole. He sojourned with his devotee and blessed his family.

St.Appar visited Tiruppazhanam in the company of our Saint and referred to the Jivan-Muktahood of our Saint in the envoi-verse of a decad sung by him. St.Appar's words: *"Appoothi kunji-p-poovai ninra Sevadiyai"* refer to the beatitude of our Saint, described as *Tadalai* in Saiva Siddhantam.

Thanks to St.Appar, our Saint reached the golden feet of Lord Siva. St.Sekkizhar's words: *"Man mazhu-k-Kaiyar potrall Vakisar adaival petra menmai Appoothiyar"* are significant. Our Saint's life bears eloquent testimony to the truth of the dictum that says: "Service to *guru* is service to God."

St. Nilanakkar

Many are the lessons, one can learn from the *Puranam* of *Tirunilanakkar.* He was a Brahmin, but not a Siva-Brahmin. He was however well-versed in the Vedas as well as the Agamas. Stanzas 5 and 6 of his *Puranam* make this abundantly clear. He was a performer of both *Anmarta* and *Pararta poojas.* On an *Adirai* day, after finishing his personal pooja, which obviously lasted for many hours, he desired to perform a *pooja* at the temple (Ayavanti) too. So with his helpmeet, (may her tribe increase), he fared forth to the temple. His wife stood by him in the adytum and aided him in the performance of the *pooja.* The *pooja* came to an end, but not the loving devotion of the Nayanar. He did his sacred circumambulation and came again to the presence of the Lord. He gazed at Him and chanted the mystic pentad. It was then a spider slipped on the ikon of the Lord. His wife, prompted by surging love, blew the insect away. Witnessing this, the servitor grew uncontrollably angry."Could you not remove it by some other means? You have defiled the Lord by your salival breath. Aroint thee. I have forsaken you." Thus he shouted at his wife, oblivious of her loving-kindness. It was the hour of sun-set and the servitor, after completing his ritual worship, proceeded to his house. His wife remained in the temple, all alone.

That night, in his slumber, Lord Siva appeared in his dream, showed His servitor His body and said: "Behold the blisters on this side of Our

body caused by the spider; also behold their absence on the other side where your wife blew and splattered." Our Saint woke up and trembled. He underwent a mystical tremendum. He hailed the Lord, danced for joy, wept and adored the Lord. When day broke, he hied to the temple, fell at the feet of the Lord and returned home with his wife.

Comparisons may be odious. However the question that stares us in our face is this: "Who is greater: our Saint or his wife?" We will answer this question in the words of David Dean Shulman who says: "The Brahmin with his Vedic heritage is here deliberately subordinated to the bhakti order, with its extreme vision. But the real hero of the tale (purana) comes, as so often in bhakti literature, from the lower limits of the social and family hierarchy -- in the form of the Brahmin's wife..." (Hinduism, p.183).

This puranam bears abundant testimony to the fact that in the distant past, woman too participated in a pooja performed in the sanctum sanctorum of a temple. A vestige of this right, according to Prof.Ganesa Sarma of Tiruvaiyaru can be witnessed even to-day in the shrine of Ayyarappan at Tiruvaiyaru. After due initiation and training, when a Sivacharya performs his maiden-pooja at the shrine in Tiruvaiyaru, he is assisted by his wife in the adytum.

Our Saint had the good fortune to host St.Sambandhar. St. Tirunilakantayazh-p-panar and his wife formed part of the entourage of St.Sambandhar. These two belonged to a low caste who could neither enter a temple nor a Brahmin's house. When St.Sambandhar bade our Saint to provide for the accommodation of these two, great was the joy of our Saint. He accommodated them in the very centre of his house, by the side of the sacrificial Vedi where fire, for ever, was burning. When the couple abode near the Vedi, the flame twirling clockwise, burnt with a greater splendour.

It was our sacredotal Saint who solemnized the marriage of St.Sambandhar. By the grace of the boy-saint, he gained ascension, along with the blessed wedding-guests.

Stradford-upon-Avon became famous by the advent of Shakespeare. Even so, Satthamangkai became renowned by the advent of our Saint. Thus did declare St.Sambandhar: "Servitors affirm that Satthamangkai is the great and grand town of upright Nilanakkar." (3-58-11).

When we think of St. Nilanakkar and his wife, we are reminded of Adam and Eve, before their fall.

"For contemplation he and valour formed,
For softness she and sweet attractive grace,
He for God only, she for God in him."

- Paradise Lost, IV, 297-99.

St. Naminandi

"The beatitude that is gained by those who light lamps (in a shrine)" says St.Appar, "is gnosis of the true way." The name of our Saint is for ever linked with this service of illumination.

Our Saint belonged to Yema-p-peroor, a town near Tiruvaroor. He glowed as "the red flame fostered by the Vedic splendour of true piety." One day after completing his ritual worship in Poongkoil, he came out of it. Then he entered the shrine of Araneri which was close by. (To-day both the shrines are in the same complex).

The sun had set and the earth was getting mantled in darkness. A desire to light lamps in Araneri possessed our Saint. He could not go home to procure the wherewithal for lighting lamps, as by the time he could return, the hour propitious would have passed away. He entered a nearby house to secure ghee. Alas, it happened to be the abode of Samanas who were remote from the light of truth.

"Lamps are a needless excess for the Lord
Who sports the fire in the palm of His hand;
We will not spare you any ghee; if you are
Bent upon lighting lamps, do it with water."

Thus spoke the unsympathetic. Stung to the quick by this pejorative blasphemy, our Saint hastened back to the shrine and fell prostrate before the Lord. Then he heard a celestial voice which said: "To rid your misery, use the water from the nearby tank." With water he fed the lamps and lit them. The shrine glowed in supernal splendour. He continued his service, practically through the night, thrilled with gratitude. Then he returned home, performed his pooja and went to bed.

He came to Tiruvaroor the next day too. He performed for the Lord manifold service during the day and as the day ended, he took to lighting lamps. His service continued for many, many days without let on hindrance.

Meanwhile, thanks to Dandi Adikal, a blind saint endowed with inner vision, the Samanas were chased away from Tiruvaroor.

The Chola-King made our Saint the Administrator of the shrines.

During the Pangkuni-uttara festival the icon of Lord Veethi Vitangka was taken in a procession to Manali, a nearby village. Our Saint participated in the festival along with others. In a festival of this nature, caste-distinctions get obliterated. Devotees of various class and clan mix freely.

When the festival came to an end, our Saint repaired to his town through the inky-dark night. When he reached home, he would not enter his house. He slept on the pial. Sometime later, his wife came there and requested him to come into the house to perform his pooja and Agni-rites. Our Saint then spoke thus: "This day our Lord visited Manali; I adored Him there with all and sundry; I am afraid, I am polluted. So, I need a purificatory bath. Attend to that." Thus bidden the wife went in to make arrangements. In the meantime, our Saint, once again slipped into slumber. The Lord Veethi Vitangka appeared in his dream and spoke thus: "All of Tiruvaroor are of our Hosts. You will soon witness this."

Our Saint woke up and felt extremely contrite. He rushed into the house and performed his duty. He also told his wife of the happening. At dawn he woke up and hastened to Tiruvaroor. All that took birth and flourished in Aroor appeared to him like the blue-throated Lord Himself. This he witnessed in sacred dread.

After this event, our Saint removed to Aroor and settled there. Eventually he came to be invested with the glory of being hailed as "The Linch-pin of servitorship" by St.Appar.

The Periya Puranam does not advocate the casting away of caste-rules. It only says that a saintly person should transcend them. It also says that Lord Siva helps the pious and the holy in this task. So the message is that caste-rules are to be transcended, not abandoned.

Both St. Sambandhar and St. Appar have sung of the greatness of St. Naminandi.

Adi Sankara's Devotion for the Nayanmar

In the Puranam of Kannappa Nayanar, we have not given the translation of five verses. These respectively begin with the words: "Poruppinil Vantha....", "Uruki avan.....", "Im malai vanthu....", "Veyya kanal....." and "Man peru mamarai....." According to the considered opinion of many a scholar, these are not from the stylus of St. Sekkizhar. In one or two enchiridions, these five stanzas were found included after the 158th stanza. These verses contain, supposedly, the words of Lord Siva addressed to Sivagocharya. A summary of these verses, is as follows: "He sweeps away the flowers on My head with his slippered foot; the touch of his foot-wear is dearer to Me than that of My young infant-Muruka. The water with which he besprinkles Me from his mouth is holier than the water of Ganga which was released by a muni through his ear. The flowers that he takes out of his hair and offers to Me are better cherished by Me than the flowers offered to Me by Brahma and Vishnu. The flesh tested by his mouth is more toothsome to Me than the havis offered to Me by Brahmins in their sacrifice. His loving words are more pleasing to Me than the stotras and the mantras

chanted by great munis."

Even so great a scholar as Maha Vidwan Meenakshi Sundaram Pillai believed these to be part of the Puranam of Kannappar (Vide pp.22 and 23, Meenakshisundaram Pillaiyavarkal Caritthiram). However a careful reading of the verses will bring to light the fact that someone who was captivated by the stotra of Adi Sankara on St.Kannappar, had introduced his praises into this Puranam by deliberate interpolation.

The 63rd verse of the Sivanandalahari runs thus:

Margavartita - paduka Pasupater angasya kurcayate
Gandusambu - nishecanam puraripor divyabhishekayate
Kimcid - bhakshita - mamsasheshakabalam navyopaharayate
Bhaktih kim na karoty aho vanacaro bhaktavatamsayate.

[The footwear worn out through use over the (jungle) pathways became the holy grass placed on the frame of Pasupati; the pouring of the mouth-borne water became the ablutions of the Vanquisher of the (triple) cities; the handful of meat that remained after his eating some, became the fresh food offering. Lo, what is impossible for devotion? The forester became the foremost of serviteurs.] The offering of flowers and leaves, the ritual bath and the neivedyam par excellence, so much admired by Adi Sankara got introduced in the Purana in Sankaresque fashion.

No one should forget that Adi Sankara -- the youthful preceptor of elderly disciples, the non-dualist champion of the sextuple faiths, the orthodox opponent of mere ritualism and the rational adversary of logicism --, was a true Siva-Bhakta. He combined in himself the clear-sightedness of the philosopher with the never-waning zeal of the devotee. He was an ardent devotee of the Nayanar. As the Tevaram Trio had chased the alien faiths away from the South, St.Sankara chose the North as his field of activity.

St. Sankara's admiration for St.Sambandhar knew no bounds. Verse 75 of the Soundaryalahari is as follows:

Tava stanyam manye dharanidharakanye hridayatah
Payahparavarah parivahati sarasvatamiva
Dayavatya dattam Dravida Shishur asvadya tava yat
Kavinam praudhanam ajani kamaniyah kavayita.

[O Parvati! I am convinced that the milk flowing from Your breast -- like unto the milk of the Milky Main --, is truly the gushing of the Word. For when You, the compassionate One, fed the Dravidian infant with Your breast-milk, did he not become the foremost among the celebrated poets?]

The Dravidian infant is none other than St.Tirugnanasambandhar. Sastra Ratnakaram Brahma Sri Tetiyoor Subrahmanya Sastrin has adduced excellent reasons in proof of this. (Vide Soundaryalahari, Giri Press, April 1958, page 230.)

The child-saint refers to this incident thus:

"When I was rebuked by my angry father,
Who rejected as a harmful thing
the sweet dish of wisdom
served in a flower-like golden cup,
the great Lord possessed me
He is the noble god who wears
the golden earring on one ear,
and he dwels with the innocent girl
in the rich city of Kalumalam." (3-24-2)

- Tr. Indira V. Peterson.

The Maha-Bharata describes the encounter of Arjuna with Lord Siva who comes to him in the guise of a hunter. Arjuna hits Him with a bow. The Tiruvilayadal Puranam narrates the episode of the Pandya king beating the Lord with a cane, who in the guise of a coolie went about frolicking without doing his duty. The Periya Puranam refers to the worship by pelting, performed by Sakya Nayanar. These three incidents are referred to by verse 89 of the Sivanandalahari which runs thus:

"Natibhir-nutibhis tvam isa puja-
Vidhibhir-dhyanasamadhibhir na tushtah,
Dhanusha musalena chashmabhirva
Vada te pritikaram tatha karomi."

This verse is translated as follows by Dr.T.M.P.Mahadevan. "O Lord! Thou art not pleased with offerings of obeisance, singings of praise, procedures of worship, meditations and concentrations. If through (hitting with) a bow, a club or stones (Thou art pleased), tell me so; I shall do what pleases Thee." (The Hymns of Sankara, p.232). This ninda-stuti, definitely though indirectly, celebrates the glory of Sakya Nayanar -- a Buddhist devotee of Siva.

St.Sankara is also the author of the Sivabhujangam. In verse 13 of *this hymn, without mentioning the names of the three* Nayanmar (Yeyarp-*pakai, Sirutthondar and Chandeswara)* he refers to their acts of tyaga. The hymn is cast in a metre known as bhujanga prayata which is suggestive of the lithe and undulating motion of a serpent. Lord Siva is a lover of serpents and His adornments are serpents.

"The untamable snake of cruel grasp heaves
Deep sighs; witnessing this, the crescent is atremble;

The Lord of Pazhanam holds that snake and dances;
Why should the Wearer of konrai garland wear them both
In His Crown?" Thus sang St.Appar.(5-35-4).

Verse 53 of the Sivanandalahari describes Siva as wearing for an ornament the chief of all serpents (samasta-phaninam).

Verse 13 of the Sivabhujangam says:

"Na shaknomi kartum paradrohalesham
Katham priyase tvam na jane girisha
Tatha hi prasannosi kasyapi kanta
Sutadrohino vaa pitrdrohino vaa."

[O Lord of mountains! I canst not cause the least harm to others. I know not why Thou dost not like me. It is widely known that Thou didst bestow grace on him that harmed his wife, on him that wronged his son and on him that harried his father].

Acts of evil perpetrated against wife, son and father (kantadroha, sutadroha and pitrdroha) are cherished by the Lord and He rewards them for such violations. "Yet" says St.Sankara, "He does not love one who does no harm to anyone." This ninda-stuti of St.Sankara's is the best of the tributes sung in praise of bhakti.

"The central theme of the Sivanandalahari is devotion to God. In this poem Acharya Sankara makes use of every literary device to set forth the nature of devotion (bhakti) and to indicate its importance in the scheme of spiritual discipline. Devotion means 'directing the modes of the mind to flow constantly towards God and making them get absorbed there.' Thinking, feeling and willing are the main functions of the mind. When these functions come to have God alone as their end, the mind is said to be devoted." (The Hymns Of Sankara, p.108).

Elsewhere, (p.113), Dr.T.M.P.Mahadevan says: "Acharya Sankara adopts in the Sivanandalahari the Saiva path for leading the devotee to Brahman-realization." St. Sankara follows the Tevaram Trio in their footsteps. Verse 41 of the Sivanandalahari is St.Appar's Tiruvangkamalai in a nut-shell. The Arch-Thief of verse 22 is St.Sambandhar's "Ullam kavar Kallvan." Siva is the Lord of thieves. The Veda offers obeisance thus: "Taskaranam pataye namah." Very probably St.Sankara remembered the verse of St.Sundarar beginning with the words: "Thammaiye pukazhnthu...." when he sang the 57th verse of the Sivanandalahari.

Verse 61 of the Sivanandalahari explicates bhakti thus: "Just as, here, the seeds of the angkola tree go and attach themselves to the tree, the needle sticks to the magnet, the chaste woman to her lord, the creeper

to the tree, and the river (runs) to the ocean, even so if the flow of the mind reaches the lotus-feet of Pasupati and remains there always, that is called devotion."

Small wonder, therefore, that St.Sankara is devoted to the Nayanmar.

Note: We are indebted to Prof. P.Tirugnanasambandhan for his article: "Saiva Nayanmars In Sri Sankara's Devotional Hymns" which appeared in SAIVA SIDDHANTA, Vol. XX, No. 1.

FOOT NOTES

1. Under the new amendment of the Judicature Act, 1925 in England, the Court may not only restrain a vexatious litigant from instituting proceedings, but also restrain him from continuing proceedings already instituted when he is declared a vexatious litigant. (Vide Judicature (Amendment) Act, 1959, S.1 (i).

2. *Vide* S.20 (c) C.P.C.

3. *Vide* S.24 C.P.C.

4. *Vide* S.63, The Indian Evidence Act.

5. *Vide* S.62, *Ibid*.

6. *Vide* O.7, R.10 (2) C.P.C.

7. *Vide* O.7, R1, C.P.C.

8. *Vide* AIR 1935 All.310 and also AIR 1953 T.C. 286 at 291.

9. "First, great emphasis had been placed in the political philosophy of the eighteenth century upon the concept of human liberty. Every man, it was said, should be free to pursue his own interests in his own way. It was therefore conceived to be the duty of the law to give effect to the wills of the parties as expressed in their agreement, and it was asserted that as few restrictions as possible should be placed upon "Freedom of Contract". This view was also promulgated by Adam Smith ...." Anson's Law of Contracts, Pages 2&3, Introduction, 23rd edition, 1971. Portia's verdict against Shylock is both against law and the terms of an enforceable agreement. The reader may consult with advantage the essay, entitled, *Law in the Trial Scene*, pages 403 to 420, The Merchant of Venice, a New Variorum Edition by Horace Furness, Dover Publication Inc., New York.

10. *Vide* S.56 of the Indian Evidence Act.

11. *Vide* Ss.14 and 101, *Ibid.*

12. "A case is only an authority for what it actually decides. The only use of authorities or decided cases is the establishment of some principle which the judge can follow out in deciding the case before him." Per Sir George Jessel M.R.; Re Hallett (1884). 13 Ch:D.712.

13. A valid custom has the force of law. Custom is to society what law is to state (Salmond).

14. *Vide* Chapter V. The Indian Evidence Act.

15. *Vide* Chapter IV, *Ibid.*

16. *Vide* Chapter II, *Ibid.*

17. *Vide* O.18, R I C.P.C.

18. a la Bench Clerk.

19. *Vide* S.90, The Indian Evidence Act.

20. *Vide* S.68, *Ibid.*

21. *Vide* S.45 il. (c) *Ibid.*, and reported cases thereunder.

22. Hamlet, Act. III. Sc.I.

INVOCATION

INVOCATION

1. OMneity is He who is rare to be comprehended
And expressed in words by all the worlds;
In His crest rest the crescent and the flood;
Limitless is His effulgence;
He dances in the *Ambalam*.
We hail and adore His ankleted flower-feet.

2. Life abiding in the tabernacle of flesh
Can sure attain its goal, the end of embodiment,
If it adores the golden feet of the Dancer
Who enacts the dance -- great and grand --,
In *Tillai* dight with melliferous gardens.

3. To come by the grace that will guide us to indite
The great hagiology in dulcet Tamil verse,
We enshrine in our thought
The ichorous Tusker-God endowed with
A pentad of arms -- long and strong --,
Dangling ears and a huge crown.

The Holy Assembly

4. May the lofty and sublime Assembly
Of the holy devotees who revel
In the wealth and weal
-- The pure flower-words of *Nayanmar*
Who have, of yore, hymned the Lord of *Ambalam*
Whose matted hair sports the crescent --,
For ever triumphantly flourish, and run
Their destined course illuminant in the world!

The Author's Apology

5. I proclaim the boundless glory
Of the immeasurable devotees;
I cannot come near the fringe even;
Yet limitless love impels me to indite this opus.

6. I am to proclaim the incomprehensible glory
Of the divine and non-pareil devotees;
My act is to be likened to an avaricious cur's
That means to lap the vast ocean-stream, dry.

7. By reason of the greatness of the theme
All will be avid to receive it.
My exposition may indeed be jejune
Having due regard to the theme;
Yet great ones poised in truth
Will relish it by reason of their greatness.

8. Wide and extensive is the earth ruled by the *Chola*
Who gold-plated the divine roof of the great *Ambalam*
Where is enshrined the Ruddy One.
As *Anapayan's* royal court, in love, willed it
(We compose this opus).

9. "The gracious nature of *(Nayanmar's)* service to God
Is indeed incomprehensible: you lack clarity;
How can you dare attempt this?"
Thus confronted, we but submit
That it is the flawless Logos,
The unbodied celestial voice
That hath initiated us in this service.

The Work Christened

10. Twyfold in this world, is the abiding hoary darkness;
The ruddy sun dispels the outer darkness;
Even so, this work will chase man's inner murk.
We name this *Tiru-th-Tondar Puranam.*

Stanza	Line	
1		We have so contrived tc introduce the first word of this stanza that its first two letters constitute the ineffable 'OM'.

1 Omneity : "That which is essentially all; that which comprehends all."
-- Webster's Dictionary.

According to the Shorter Oxford Dictionary, Omneity means: "The condition of being all; "allness". Though God is all, all is not God. Though Pati comprehends all, according to St. Sekkizhar all the worlds can seldom comprehend Him, much less express Him in words. Pati is even beyond the Vedas and the Agamas. These point the way which leads to Him; but these are not the destination.

2 flood : The river Ganga.

4 His effulgence is not only limitless but is verily the source of all light.

5 The Ambalam : Tillai-Ambalam, the shrine of Nataraja (the Lord-Dancer) at Chidambaram. Mystically speaking the Ambalam is the soul. In Saiva Siddhanta Tillai is the centre of the universe.

6 Flower-feet: மலர் சிலம்படி : According to Maha Vidwan Meenakshisundaram Pillai, the word "malar" grammatically speaking, is an instance of "vinai-th-tokai" which is indicative of the past, the present and the to-come. St. Sekkizhar's **வாழ்த்தி வணங்குவோம்** (vazhthi vanangkuvam) are the very words of St. Appar who in his Thiru Marukal Tevaram says: **வாழ்த்தி வணங்கவே** (vazhthi vanangkave).

3 The Dancer (Varatar) **வரதர்** : Called Bharata by the Rg Veda. He is knwon as Tandaweswara, the Lord of Dance. Varatar may also mean: "He who grants boons".

3 St. Sekkizhar calls his work a "ma-k-kathai", a great (hi) story. It is a history of saints and the facts narrated by the saint are hundred percent true.

The huge crown worn by Ganapati is an indicant of His Viswarupa.

4 4 Nayanmar : Plural of Nayanar. Nayakan became Nayan (by elision) and Nayan acquiring the respectful suffix "aar" became Nayanar. The message of this stanza is as follows: May the light issuing from the Holy Assembly of the great devotees guide the destiny of this, our world.

5 2 The devotees are Nayanmar whose greatness is immeasurable.

6 Kamban, the celebrated author of the Ramayana in Tamil, compares himself to a cat which is out to drink clean the Ocean of Milk.

8 3 Ruddy One : Lord Siva.

9 Even though King Anapayan and his royal court requested our saint to compose the work, he awaited the divine sanction. Then he heard the unbodied celestial voice proclaiming "Ulakelam", and with this term forming the first words of his work the saint began to ply his stylus. The dictum of Dr. G. U.Pope which says that the entire first line of the hymn was dictated by God is to be understood in this light.

BOOK THE FIRST

TIRUMALAI-CH-CHARUKKAM

1. The Glory of the Divine Mountain

1. HE who is not to be comprehended by any one
For ever abides in the divine peak of the great *Kailas*
Which is atop the wide, snowy and awesome mountain
That bears on its golden frame white stripes
Like unto those of the holy ash. (11)

2. As the Lord is here enthroned
The triple worlds and the four *Vedas*
Have come hither to perform endless askesis;
So does it look like Piety's own congregation. (12)

3. If with all the innumerable regions
As bright and shining leaves, the world is
Wrought into a lustrous liana
The awesome mount will be (like) its white bloom. (13)

4. There resound the chanting of the four lofty *Vedas*,
The strumming of *vinas* by celestial musicians,
The trumpeting of tuskers as the clouds rumble
And the ever-glorious music of the celestial *tuntupis*. (14)

5. Behold here numberless billions of chaplets
To adorn the crown of the Lord
Worshipfully held by the immortals of cool skyey realms,
Garlands of golden blooms from the holy *Karpaka*
And garlands of prayer by saints galore. (15)

6. Billions and billions of *Bhootas* -- small and short --,
Here sing and dance in sheer ecstasy;
These can, if they so desire, usher into existence
The five elements and fill the offices of Gods too. (16)

7. Unable to worship the Lord as the hour is not propitious,
Brahma returns and stands baffled.
He cannot discern his swan, totally lost
In the pure and white lustre of the awesome mountain. (17)

8. He knows not that *Vishnu* is abiding his time
To adore the feet of *Siva* decked with white ear-rings;
He beholds in the slope of the dazzlingly white *Kailas*
A bandicoot -- the mount of the Tusker-God --,
Surface up from a cavern.
Deeming that to be the primal boar that this day
Is out to bore the earth to reach the foot
Of the red column of fire now turned white,
Garuda wings his way to it. (18)

9. There dance the heavenly danseuses to the beat
Of *muzhavu* and the roar of cataracts;
With palms full of melliferous flowers of the divine tree
And with loving minds seeking boons
Indra and other gods ascend the ever-crowded steps
Of the long and lofty way dight with *mantapams* and *vimanas*,
Hymning all the while His divine praise. (19)

10. *Brahma*, *Vishnu*, *Indra* and other countless gods
Come thronging to adore (Him) in boundless love:
These stand at the first tower wrought of lustrous gems;
There they are restrained by *Nandi* -- the Chamberlain
Of Lord *Siva*, the Primal God who dances in the Court
Adored by *Bhootas*, *Vetalas* and *Gananatas*. (20)

11. By the grace of the Lord of matted hair, *Nandi*
Is invested with the office of guarding *Kailas*;
He is the Chief of the great many who are forehead-eyed,
Four-shouldered and who wear the holy ash on their bodies,
Also the devotees of Lord *Siva* who rides the Bull
Decked with *pinggnakam*, and all others too;
He wields in his flowery hands
The sword and the divine cane. (21)

12. The Lord holds an antelope in His (left) hand
And a *mazhu* in His (right) hand.
His matted hair where courses *Ganga*, is decked
With the young crescent
And a chaplet of *(Konrai)* flowers.
By reason of His enthronement here,
The presence of measureless glory

And the flourishing of the sheer purity of truth's lustre,
The wide range of *Kailas* is like unto the mind divine
Of *Anapayan* of triumphant parasol white --
The fearless King that wields a righteous sceptre. (22)

13. Seated on its divine slope
Saint *Upamanyu* of inconceivable glory
For ever meditates in blissful ecstasy
On *Siva* whose nature none can know. (23)

14. This saint placed his feet on the crown
Of *Yadhava*, the king of *Dwàraka;*
Peerless is his service to *Siva*, the Lord of *Bhootas*,
And it knows neither beginning nor end. (24)

15. The Saint, of yore, was fed by the Ocean of Milk
By the grace of Lord *Siva*, the Father;
He grew solely sustained by the milk of *Siva's* grace;
Myriads of holy saints and *suddha* yogis sat encircling him. (25)

16. Before them all, gushed forth a growing light
With the great brilliance of a thousand suns;
The great *tapaswis* pure and others
Who sat encircling the Saint
Marvelling said: "What wonder is this!" (26)

17. Thereupon the Saint invoked in thought the feet
Of the Lord -- the wearer of the crepuscular crescent --,
And said: "By the grace of our Father,
He who incarnated in the South as the Lord of *Navaloor*
-- Gloried *Van-tondan* --, doth now return." (27)

18. As the great Saint of matted hair -- long and ruddy --,
Folding his hands in adoration rose up and walked
Toward the direction whence gushed forth the great light,
All athrill, as if immersed in a sea of joy,
The holy ones, to have their doubt resolved,
Implored him thus: (28)

19. "You, Our Lord, never adore aught but the lotus-feet
Of *Sambhu*; what may this be?"
Thus questioned, he said: "*Nambi Arooran*
Hath enshrined in his bosom the great Lord;
He is verily worthy of our adoration." (29)

20. Hearing this they worshipfully beseeched him;
"Great is our desire to hear of the gloried *tapas*
Of him who blazes forth in triumphal lustre great!
May you, in grace, be pleased to narrate it." (30)

21. Then the Saint began his true narration thus:
"Unto the True Ens, the Lord of Munificence
In whose crest courses the flood of *Ganga*,
His service was to gather honey-laden blooms
And weave them into garlands;
He was also the bearer of His Holy Ash. (31)

22. "His name was *Alala Sundarar.*
One day, of yore, to gather fresh flowers
Wherewith to deck the Primordial Lord
He fared forth to the flower-garden. (32)

23. "Thither came a pair of women, passing beautiful,
With visages like unto the full-moon bright,
To gather flowers, rich in pollen,
For the Lord's Consort whom they served. (33)

24. "When *Anintitai* of boundless glory and *Kamalini*
Of dark and dense hair adorned with a fragrant wreath,
Were gathering choice flowers from the bunches,
It happened like the grace of the Lord of Gods. (34)

25. "For the great thriving of the South
That indeed had wrought immense *tapas*,
He who was to incarnate thither and hymn
The flawless *Tiru-th-tonda-th-Tokai*,
Did set his mind on them both;
The loving lasses also revelled in the joy
Of beholding him. (35)

26. "He gathered many many flowers -- fit for the Lord,
That were about to bloom and sought by bees,
And went away; like him the pen-like lasses
Also gathered cool flowers and hied away. (36)

27. "The Primal Lord beheld him and said:
"You set your mind on the damsel-pair;
Be born in the southern realm;
Be linked with them in loving joy, and then return." (37)

28. "Hearing this he was dismayed;
Folding his hands in worship, he addressed Him thus:
"O Lord, if in my confounding human state
I stand bewildered, do redeem me
By Your gracious intercession." (38)

29. The Lord of great compassion said: "Let it be so."
Then he and the damsel-pair, as gracious mortals
Took birth in the South and lived in connubial joy.
They have now hither returned."
To his holy audience *Upamanyu* fully narrated their lives. (39)

30. The saints of loving kindness,
Who were listening to him said:
"All the eight directions are realms where souls
Get embodied befitting their *karma*; what especial piety
Has indeed been wrought by the South
To merit in its realm, his incarnation?" (40)

31. The great *tapaswi* then replied thus:
"*Perumpatra-p-Puliyur* is here situate, adored by
My father *Vyagrapada*, the great saint of peerless *tapas*;
It flourishes as the treasure of those
Who adore the Lord with single-minded devotion. (41)

32. "In that holy realm, the eternal Lord.dances willingly
In the great *Ambalam*, for ever, in the presence
Of our Mother, the divine liana of true *tapas*.
Which other direction can rival the South in its glory? (42)

33. "In every embodied soul, the heart burgeons
Even as a bud blossoms; from the lotus-heart
Of the lovely Mother-Earth
Whence effloresces the seed of the *Vedas*
Aroor of *Ardhanariswara* has blossomed. (43)

34. "My Deity -- the Mother of the seven worlds --,
Attained here, the Lord by Her unique *tapas*
And adored Him on the banks of the river *Kampai*
At *Kanchi* hailed by all the celestials. (44)

35. "It is here in the South, our Lord -- *Guru Nandi* --,
Performed *tapas*, and came by ever-growing grace eternal;
The Lord who sports the flood in His matted hair
And wields the fire in His hand,
Abides here in *Aiyaru*. (45)

36. "It is in the South, the Lord's hallowed *Tonipuram*
That illumines all realms, and holy shrines galore
Fit for the adoration of *Siva*, are situate.
Truly no direction can match the South in its glory." (46)

37. Thus spake the Saint, of the glorious history
Of *Van-tondar;* in unison with his explication
And in accordance with the *Tiru-th-tonda-th-Tokai*
Which historicises the gloried lives of the devotees
We now elaborately indite this work in love. (47)

38. The truly divine decad *of Van-tondar's Tiru-th-tonda-th-Tokai*
Wrought with the grace of the Ancient One
Enshrined in the Ant-Hill,
Is the base and source of this work;
We humbly hail it and commence our work. (48)

39. Our Lord *Nambi-Andar-Nambi*, with all his heart
Adored in verse the devotees hailed by
That divinely true decad; with his work too
As our guide we compose this work -- unflawed. (49)

40. For the world to flourish and *Saivism*
To soar aloft and thrive, *Nambi-Aroorar*
Of infinite glory hymned the holy company
Of devotees, and we now proceed to hail
Their great country, watered by the cool *Cauvery.* (50)

Stanza	Line		
1		The mountain referred to is the Himalayas. The golden peak is suggestive of Siva, and the snow, the stripes of the holy ash on His divine frame.	
3		The world, its demesnes and the Kailas are respectively the creeper, its leaves and the white bloom.	
4	4	Tuntupi	: A musical instrument.
5	4	Karpaka	: The wish-yielding celestial tree.
	5	Garlands of prayer are Gitanjali.	
6	1	Bhootas	: They form a section of Siva's host and are almost omnipotent.

3-4 cf. "...... the least of whom could wield
These elements ...."

- Paradise Lost, Book Vi, ll. 221-22.

7 3 Swan : The mount of Brahma.

8 1 He : Garuda: "A Hindu demigod, part man, part bird."

- Chamber's Twentieth Century Dictionary.

He is the vehicle of Vishnu. It is said that when Brahma, the Creator and Vishnu, the Sustainer quarrelled with each other, each claiming to be the Supreme One, Siva appeared before them as a Column of ruddy flame. Confronted thus by the fiery pillar, they cried a halt to their quarrel and wanted to find out what the pillar was. Brahma took the form of a swan and flew up to behold the top of the column. Vishnu assumed the form of a white boar (sveta-varaha) and burrowed the bowels of earth to reach its foot. Both failed.

9 2 Muzhavu : A percussion instrument.

6 Vimana : The crown of a mantapam.

Mantapam : Temple-porch.

10 Vetalas : A division of Siva's host.

Gananatas : The captains of Siva's hosts.

11 6 Pinggnakam : An ornament of the head. Some scholars opine that as Siva wears His matted hair as a crown, He is called Pinggnakan.

3-4 The forehead-eyed and four-shouldered are the holy ones who have attained Siva-Saroopya (Siva's form).

12 2 Mazhu : A burning rod. It also refers to a battle-axe.

4 Konrai : Cassia fistula. It has long, bright yellow leaves.

7 Purity of truth's lustre refers to the holy ash according to Siva-k-Kavi C.K.Subramania Mudaliyar.

8–9 Like unto the mind divine of Anapayan

The *Big temple* at *Thanjavur* bears eloquent testimony to the immensity as well as greatness of the mind of Raja Raja, the ancestor of Anapayan.

Stanzas 8 to 12, it is said, are not by St. Sekkizhar. The authorship of stanza 18 is erroneously attributed to *Velli Ambala Tampiran.*

13 3 Blissful ecstasy' : This is born of Siva-yogic comprehension.

14 2 refers to Vishnu. When he incarnated as Krishna, he was initiated in Siddhanta *Saivam* by St. *Upamanyu.*

3 Bhootas : This word comprehends all lives.

4 *None can say when St. Upamanyu's service to the Lord began and when* it would end. It goes on for ever and ever.

15 1–2 Upamanyu's father is St. Vyagrapada. When Upamanyu was a tender child, he once cried, smitten by hunger. At the *request of his father*, Siva directed the *Ocean of Milk to flow gently towards the child and feed him.*

4 Suddha yogis : Yogis of the Suddha Marga. According to Dr. V.V.Ramana Sastrin, Appar, Tirugnanasambandhar, Sundarar and Manickavachakar are apostolic Siddhas of the Suddha Marga.

17 Stanza 13 says' that St. Upamanyu for ever meditates in blissful ecstasy *on Siva. "How is this", one may ask, "compatible with his present invocation?".* The answer is that the saint invokes Siva, for leave, to narrate to the holy company, what he already knows.

4 Van-tondan : Wild devotee. Siva named St. Sundarar thus. Service to the Lord is of two types, mild and wild: (van-tondu and men-tondu). The mild devotee serves the Lord, never once transgressing the bournes set by the Sastras. *The wild devotee sometimes goes beyond* the limits prescribed.

19 2 Sambhu : Siva.

3 Nambi Arooran : St. Sundarar.

21 4 His : St. Sundarar's.

23	1	Passing beautiful	: *Surpassingly beautiful.*
25	4	Tiru-th-tonda-th-Tokai	: The garland of hymns composed by St. Sundarar in praise of Nayanmar.
	5	The act of St. Sundarar was divinely purposive. His action was willed by Siva for the benefit of mankind.	
30	4	Karma	: "noun, the conception of the quality of actions, including both merit and demerit, determining the future condition of all sentient beings; the theory of inevitable consequence generally; the result of the actions of a life." - Chamberts Twentieth Century Dictionary.
31	2	Perumpatra-p-Puliyur	: Chidambaram; also known as Tillai.
32	3	Liana	: The comparison of a woman to a slender creeper is common in Tamil and Sanskrit literature.
33		The seed of the Vedas	: Om.
	4	Ardhanariswara	: The androgynic form shared by Siva and His Consort.
34	2	Here	: Here in the South.
35	4	Aiyaru	: Thiruvaiyaru, the shrine of the five streams, they being Siva-Pada Ganga, Devi Ganga, Rishabha Ganga, the Cauvery and the Stream of Bliss that issues from Nandi.
36	1	Tonipuram	: Sirkazhi, the birth place of St. Tirugnana Sambandhar.

2. The Hallowed Country

1. On the lofty peak of snow-clad Himavant
-- The hugest of mountains --, thrives the Flag of Tiger;
Of the wide-ranging realms -- the object of Tamil poesy --,
I sing of the *Chola* country by the *Cauvery* enriched. (51)

2. From the sacred *Kamandalu* of *Agastya*
-- The primal saint of great *tapas* --, flowed the *Cauvery*;
It is like unto a garland of pearls of purest ray serene,
On the golden breasts of the lovely Lady-Earth. (52)

3. It courses down gloriously from the *Kudaku* Mount;
It is verily a nurse unto the goodly Maiden the Earth;
It is rich in water that daily flows to sustain
And foster all species of lives on earth. (53)

4. As it issues gloriously from flowery eddies
Like *Brahma* from *Vishnu's* lotus-calix,
As it fosters many a life
Like *Brahma* creating them all,
As it emerges from *Agastya's Kamandalu*
Very like the one of *Brahma's*
The great river *Ponni* is like *Brahma*. (54)

5. As the *Cauvery* flows down from the mount
Over which shines the moon
Like the *Ganga* descending from *Siva's* crown
Decked with the shining moon,
As it gushes forth with foam and spume, like *Ganga*,
Virgin *Cauvery* is *Ganga* herself
Who pours down from the crown of our Lord-God. (55)

6. By reason of its noble birth in the mountain
And its generous fostering of multifoliate *dharma*
The river is very like the compassionate flow
Of the inly melting grace of the Goddess
Who shares *Siva's* frame. (56)

7. With its fragrant flowers and water
And with its golden sand, the river of ceaseless flow
Adores the temples of *Siva* on either side of its bank;
Verily it is like the devotees of the Lord of gods. (57)

8. The river runs as its waves wash away the *kumkum*
And the sandal-paste smeared on the breasts
Of women who plunge and bathe in its sweet waters.
Though the river is by nature, pure and bright,
Yet it does lack pellucidity. (58)

9. Bees buzz over it and honey spills into it
As the river flows down the hill carrying fresh flowers;
To enrich the land by feeding its numerous tanks
The river runs through many a channel. (59)

10. In bright fords as the flood runs through sluices
And reaches the fields, farmers greet it
In joyous ovation and this loud greeting
Pierces the skyey realm of gods and passes beyond it too. (60)

11. A few gather the comely seedlings;
A few tie them up in pretty bundles
And send them all to the watery fields.
The farmers till the fields in dinsome joy;
All these are sights to see. (61)

12. The transplanters throng thick in the fields
Enriched by the blemishless *Cauvery;*
In all the tilled fields that are watered
And made miry, they adore *Devendra*. (62)

13. In the transplanted fields fresh water pours;
The seedlings grow and their first blades uncoil;
Beholding this, farmers say:
"It is time for the weeding operation."
The farmwives amble forth lightly
As pearl-yielding conches upset their gait;
Their hair-do's buzzed over by bees, gently shake,
And they walk slowly toward the ridges. (63)

14. They weed out red-lilies, but wear them on their dark locks;
They try to chase away the bees with their flowery hands
Which but attract other bees galore.
Their moon-like foreheads gently perspire;
Their teeth, like *mullai*-buds, flash out smiles;
They sip honey from new-blown lotuses. (64)

15. "These are not sugarcanes but only paddy stalks;
These are not areca trees but only sugarcanes."
Thus are the fields by beholders described.
As bees thither pierce the blue lilies
Their dust scatters and make the day night.
"These are not buds but only breasts;
These are not nectar but only nectarean words."
Thus, even thus, are they -- the myriad women
That stand thick in the fields. (65)

16. On the banks of tanks where carps thrive, lie the shells
Of dead snails; these serve them as toy-cooking-pots;
Into them they pour as water the nectar of flowers
And also pearls delivered by chanks;
Carapaces serve them as cooking-ovens;
For heating them with fire they use flame-red lotuses.
Thus on the ridges the little farm-girls play-act. (66)

17. Wild grow the sweetcanes like a forest;
Gardens are all full of buds and blooms;
On all sides burgeon the blue lilies;
Conch and chank lie teeming in the fields;
The banks of tanks are thick with swans,
And tanks themselves are vast like seas!
No land, aye, by any means, can match the *Chola*-land. (67)

18. The din of them that ply the sweetcane-press,
The hum of bees that wing in the groves
And the chant of the *Vedas* (for the world to thrive)
Commingle and far exceed the oceanic roar. (68)

19. In the broad fords where play the swans,
The buffaloes plunge and get immersed.
The leap of *Valai* to the areca trees
Is like a rainbow-flash in the abiding sky. (69)

20. The bees of groves eke do sip
Honey from blooms in the adjacent pools.
The leaping carps hit the garden trees
And spill their fruits in abundance. (70)

21. They grow lofty, dense and peerless, in the wide fields,
Rich in pure pulp, bright and white;
Eftsoons they become pallid in advanced pregnancy;
Then they uncoil, and like the gracious hearts
Of those that are devoted to *Siva*,
Beam with light eventually. (71)

22. Serving devotees of the Lord, borne by *bhakti*
When meeting one another bow low their heads in obeisance;
Even so, the ears of corn, dense and full-grown,
Bow low in long and serried order and yield abundance
Like unto endless godly love that marks holy devotees. (72)

23. Sheaves of corn with stalks are piled into hills;
The sifted grains are heaped into long hill-ranges;
The pearls of whorled conches are gathered
Into huge dazzling mountainous heaps;
Honey from blown flowers is distilled and stored apart. (73)

24. Stalks to which grains remain still attached
Are heaped like a hill with well-formed slopes;
Over them are plied buffaloes, huge and black,
Which go round and round to winnow the sticking grains;
This is like unto *nimbi* sailing round the slopes
Of the golden Mount in worshipful circumambulation. (74)

25. De-grained hay stalks are gathered apart;
The grains are strewn abroad for the wind
To sift them from the chaff;
Like hills of ruddy gold and ninefold gems
The grain-hills, raised sky-high, dazzle. Lo!
The *maruda*-realm dight with lotus-pools
Looks like a country rich in hills. (75)

26. Taxes due to the government paid, they perform
The primary *dharma* with a portion of what is theirs;
They hail the deity in worship due
And foster their parents, manes, guests and righteous kin.
Thus flourish the subjects of the realm
Teeming in mansions huge as hills. (76)

27. Is it the fragrant smoke rising from ovens
Where boils the juice of sweetcanes?
Is it the smoke that chases away the bees from blooms
Worn by women whose wet tresses
Are dried by the smoke of eagle-wood?
Is it the smoke rising from the halls of sacrifice

Where are planted *yupa* columns?
Or is it the congregation of *nimbi* on high?
None can say what type of smoke it is
That surrounds the groves and mansions everywhere. (77)

28. Coco palms, *Cerunti*, citron trees of fragrant blooms
Peepul trees, *kadambu*, *pacchilai* and *kura* trees
Of cool blooms, broad-based palmyrahs, sandal trees,
Kumkum, *vanchi* of long leaves, *kanchi*
And *konku* of abundant blooms thrive everywhere. (78)

29. Mango rees, *patiri*, *sura-punnai* rich
With flower-bunches, crocus, *picchi* creepers
Jasmine lianas, soft-petalled *aniccha*,
Kurukkatthi, deodar, *makizh* and *champaka*,
Fragrant screw-pine, areca and *punnai* trees
Grow everywhere in this blessed realm. (79)

30. The realm is marked by festal ceremonies
And dinsome jubilee of connubia;
Lotus-faces and melodic voices
Are seen and heard everywhere;
From men and women, jewels dazzle;
Flowery *pandals* breathe fragrance;
The fields are rich in ruddy carps;
Each place is indeed the abode of *Lakshmi*. (80)

31. One eyes everywhere elephants and rain-clouds;
One hears everywhere the *Vedas* chanted and cultivated;
Everywhere are *yoga* and *tapas* practised by men;
Swings of damsels too are seen everywhere;
Ubiquitous pervade joy of life and prosperity,
Like the presence of holy saints everywhere. (81)

32. Melodic *Vipanchi yazhs* are played everywhere;
Crimson foot-prints of women the soles of whose feet
Are dyèd with red silk-cotton, feast the eye everywhere;
Bees buzz over tresses everywhere;
Tuneful notes of melodic flutes are heard everywhere;
The *Vedas* are chanted wherever the devotees abide;
From the gardens wafts-everywhere the fragrance
Of *Atthi* trees and jack-fruit trees. (82)

33. On all sides are seen elephant cubs;
On blooms are bees everywhere;
In all houses, music resounds, and women play *Ammanai;*
Flags fly aloft everywhere; ubiquitous are the heaps of wealth;
Garlands of many-petalled blooms are found everywhere;
Wreaths of lovers everywhere are innumerable. (83)

34. Uproarious are the streets with festivities,
Where rousing reception is in love offered to guests;
Castes deviate not from their righteous ways;
House there is none that lacks the wealth of children;
Birds and beasts dwell in peace and harmony;
Divine *Lakshmi* loves to dwell here;
As all lives chant the *Panchakshara*
Mortal maladies fear to tread here. (84)

35. Of all the realms embraced by goodly Tamil
The divine realm hailed by us, is ruled impartially,
By the valour of his broad and beauteous shoulders;
He set at naught the dictum that the world
Belongs to all, and made it solely his own;
As the land thrives in peace under the golden shade
Of the parasol of the benign ruler, victorious *Anapaya*,
Can we at all essay to set forth its glories? (85)

Stanza	Line		
1	1	Himavant	: The Himalayas.
		cf. "...... the black clouds Gathered far distant, over Himavant." - T.S.Eliot.	
	2	The Flag of Tiger	: The Flag of the Chola Kings.
2	1	Kamandalu	: The water-jar always carried by a holy man.
4		The pun in the original cannot be spun out with equal ease in the translation. What is attempted here is but a paraphrase.	
	7	Ponni	: The Cauvery.
6		The river is the daughter of the mountain; so too is Uma, the daughter	

of Himavant. The river fosters many a dharma. So too the Goddess. Hence the comparison.

cf. "........ it is heavenly Ganga, bless her!
Where she flows, Dharma and gold are yielded."
- Bharati.

12 3 Devendra : Lord Indra.

14 5 Mullai : The November-flower, Jasminum Trichotomum.

19 3 Valai : A fish, Trichiurus Lepturus.

21 This stanza equates the growth of paddy-grains to the devoted hearts of Siva's serviteurs. The points of comparison are:

a. Like the growing grains, the devotees grow from strength to strength in loftiness and stateliness.

b. The ears of corn are gravid with pure white pulp. The devotees too are full of the milk of true wisdom.

c. As the grains grow they suffer a change of hue. A similar change of hue comes over the devotees too, as they mature in devotion.

d. Whatever lay coiled within the husk, uncoils after a time. Even so, the once-kinky twists in the minds of the devotees get uncoiled in due time.

e. When the grains are fully ripe, they dazzle with lustre. The mellowed devotees too shine with a godly lustre.

24 6 Golden Mount : Meru: Himavant.

26 Tiruvalluvar says (Tirukkural 43):

"The manes, God, guests, kindred, self in due degree,
These five to cherish well is chiefest duty."

St. Sekkizhar, the erst-while chief-minister adds to this list, the payment of taxes due to the government.

30 8 Lakshmi : The Goddess of Wealth.

33 3 Ammanai : A favourite game of Women. See page 117 of G.U.Pope's 'The Tiruvacagam'.

34 Panchakshara : The mystic pentad of letters.

3. Tiruvaroor -- the City Divine

1. The city hailed by us is the most ancient;
   It is the one adored by Goddess *Lakshmi;*
   The city divine is *Tiruvaroor*, presided over
   By the Lord who sports on His matted hair
   Vanni, Ganga and crescent-moon. (86)

2. Chant of *Vedas*, sweet music of *Vinas*,
   Hymnal words of bright celestials,
   Rhythmic beat of *muzhavus* as danseuses dance
   And melodic notes mingle here in this city. (87)

3. With the manifold melodies of musical instruments
   The noise of chariot wheels as they pass
   Through the opulent streets,
   The trumpeting of tuskers strong
   And the neighing of many a steed
   Commingle and resound everywhere. (88)

4. In lofty mansions and man-made monticles,
   In *mantapams*, exedras and theatres
   In towered buildings and spacious *pials*
   In windowed courts and platforms too
   Anklets of danseuses resonate tinkling. (89)

5. Many are the mansions of *Rudra-Ghanikas;*
   In one of them, *Paravaiyar* the divine servingmaid
   Of Her who shares the form of *Sambhu*, made her *avatar*.
   Can words ever measure the greatness of this city? (90)

6. As the Lord unknowable to the Hog and the Swan,
As a messenger of *Van-tondar* plied his steps
In that street where is situate her gemmy mansion bright,
It is still fragrant with the touch of His lotus-feet. (91)

7. Over the *kumkum*-paste sprinkled on the streets
By the red-eyed damsels, pollen falls from fresh flowers
Worn by them on their abundant locks,
And thus is dried the fragrant mire. (92)

8. Whose heart will not melt? In all the streets of *Tiruvaroor*
Where is enshrined the Lord who rides the Bull,
The divine *padikams* are rendered by the green parakeets;
The starlings listen to them in rapture. (93)

9. As they are full of bright jewels,
As dinsome noise resounds there
And as goods a good many are there stored and sold,
The traders' streets are like unto the sea. (94)

10. Apart from the chanting of the *Vedas*, is also heard
In the streets, the trumpeting of the serried tuskers;
Not only are seen in the city the celestials who come
To witness *Ananku-Aadal*, but also festoons and wreaths. (95)

11. The hoary and divine city is the habitat of them
Whose matted hair is huge and long,
Saivites, *tapaswis*, saints who are renunciants,
Brahmins and also those who are willingly
Immersed in the sweets of love. (96)

12. This city of the *Cholas* is like the *tilaka*
On the broad and beauteous forehead of the Lady-Earth;
It is also like the rich and blooming lotus
On which is enthroned *Lakshmi;*
Infinite is its glory. (97)

13. The monarch of this hoary city
Hails from the hallowed solar race;
Glorious *Anapaya* is his name, the descendant of *Manu*,
The jewelled king, himself a jewel bright. (98)

14. This great Ruler was like the eye and soul
Of all the lives that throve on this earth;
He nobly performed a good many sacrifices
That the celestials felt immensely pleased. (99)

15. With the royal disc cincturing the earth,
With vassal-kings holding tributes, surrounding his court,
With righteousness totally freed from wrath,
He reigned in the realm, and his reign came to be called
Manu-Niti, stablished by the Grand *Manu*. (100)

16. The Lord of the Gospels -- *Vanmika Natha* --,
Is ever present everywhere; unto His worship
In unison with holy Aagamic commandments
The king duly ordained everything. (101)

17. He held fast to the Way of Righteousness,
Wealth and Joy, and did not from it swerve;
He quelled Sin, and ruled, hailed by monarchs;
Unto his pious queen who was quick with child,
Was born a son as a guerdon for his great *tapas;*
He grew gloriously hailed by the earth as a lion-cub. (102)

18. The peerless son, the guerdon of *tapas* rare,
Daily cultivated flawlessly all the divine scriptures
That would lead him to *Siva;* he also came by
The mastery of cavalry, elephantry,
And the art of leading armed chariots.
Thus did he demonstrate to the world
That even birth on earth can indeed be a beatitude. (103)

19. He mastered the innumerable hoary arts, and grew
As a paragon of virtues, greatly gladdening
The heart of his peerless father.
Such was his attainment, that ere long,
He could be, crowned as the Prince;
He was like the young sun growing gloriously bright. (104)

20. Decked with fragrant wreaths and sandal-paste
One day the strong-shouldered prince,
Surrounded by princelings
Fared forth on the royal street
Dight with cloud-crested mansions;
Armed warriors too marched encircling him;
Thus on the chariot bright he rode
From the royal palace of the parasolled king. (105)

21. The minstrels followed singing eulogies, on one side,
Sootas and *Magatas* on another;
Melting in love, chank-bangled lasses moved on another;
Drummers and blowers of shells, on yet another;
Thus the victorious prince moved through the street
That dazzled beauteous with gems and jewels. (106)

22. Like the merciless coming down
Of the peerless God of *Dharma*
To put to the test the unwavering mind
Of the king ever-poised in truth, invisible to mortal eyes,
Though many were there surrounding the prince,
A cow's calf, young and beauteous, darted into the street. (107)

23. The tender calf leapt across dangerously,
And run over by the powerful wheel of the golden car
Breathed its last; this witnessing, its mother
Wilted, cried aloud, trembled and fell down on earth. (108)

24. The prince eyed this and cried: "Woe is me!"
His words became incoherent; sore was his heart
As he stood utterly bewildered; he cried aloud:
"The cow and its calf have this day, undone
My glorious life! O poor helpless me!"
Down he tumbled from the car and fell on earth. (109)

25. Looking at the great cow that cried in agony,
He too trembled and his life seemed to ebb away;
He stared contrite for long at the calf, and gasped
For breath; he then gave vent to his feeling thus:
"Unto *Manu*, the protector of this wide earth -- my sovereign --,
I am born as son alas, to involve him in this sin." (110)

26. If expiation of the sin that had come into being,
By the means prescribed by the Brahmins well-versed
In the *Vedas*, would be righteous and proper,
I would do it even ere my father comes to know of this."
To cure himself of the sin he approached the Brahmins. (111)

27. As the calf dear as its life, passed away,
Unable to bear that grief any longer
The cow sighed deep -- its each breath a flame of agony --,
And sobbed with tear-bedewed eyes;
Then, unto the golden palace of *Manu*, the wielder
Of the righteous sceptre and protector of lives,
It proceeded, and there moved and tolled
The bell (of justice) with its twin horns. (112)

28. Was it the drumming of Reproach?
Or the din of fettering Sin?
Or the tinkling of bells worn on the neck
Of the Buffalo of *Yama* who comes to snatch
The life of the only scion of the King?
Thus rang the bell -- hitherto untolled --,
On the ears of the sovereign, wordlessly. (113)

29. He rose from the throne, and down came he,
-- The King --, to the threshold of the palace;
The ostiaries came to him and bowing said:
"O Lord, a cow hath to your victorious threshold
Come and moved the dangling bell with its horns. (114)

30. He heard them and eyed the grief-stricken cow;
He longed to know what had happened to it;
He with contempt, looked at his minister,
And he, a man of mature wisdom, who knew
All that happened, bowing spake thus: (115)

31. "*Chola* great! as your son mounted the huge gem-inlaid car
And fared forth surrounded by numberless footmen
Through the royal street, the tender calf of this cow
Darted into its wheel and perished; the mother-cow
Sore languishing, hath done this deed." (116)

32. As the king heard this, his grief equalled the very cow's;
He felt as though some cruel venom coursed in him
And smote his skull; he suffered exceedingly;
He was pained as to how it could so happen cruelly;
He inculpated himself of mis-rule;
He grew bewildered, and though he recovered a little
He felt utterly undone. (117)

33. "Long have I ruled the world protecting its lives,
Poised in piety; oh noble is my present reign!"
Thus lamenting, he said! "How can this be expiated?"
Looking at the cow that had lost its calf,
He would again languish; limitless was his sorrow. (118)

34. Beholding him thus, the ministers
Bowed at his feet and said:
"Wilting of mind is no cure for this;
You may be pleased to do that to your son, as is ordained
Of yore, by the Brahmins for the act of cow-slaughter." (119)

35\. "If you suggest that the remedy lies in doing that
Which is by the Brahmins ordained, will that be
A cure for the agony of the cow that bellows aloud,
Having lost its tender calf by murder vile?
If I lend my ears to you all who are out
To save my son from my punishing him with death,
Will not *Dharma* itself shudder and quake? (120)

36\. "Is not the ruler of a realm that guards its lives
Duty-bound to rid his subjects
Of hindrance-breeding fear fivefold
Stemming from himself, his men in power,
Harmful hostility of foes, thieves and wild animals,
And thus protect *Dharma*? (121)

37\. "If I resort to expiation for the grave sin
By my son committed, and punish another with death
When he does away with a life, will not words of blame
Proclaiming the destruction of *Manu's* hoary code
By one who comes in his very line, cling to me?
O ye ministers that will have me stigmatised,
Strange indeed is your sense of law and justice!" (122)

38\. When the king thus spake in contempt, to his ministers,
The wise ones said: "Protector of hoary earth!
What we expressed is founded on precedents;
It will not be in keeping with the righteous tradition
To kill the prince; is not performance of expiation
As ordained by the *Vedas*, the honoured hoary way?" (123)

39\. Hearing the ministers who bowing spoke to him,
Manu the heroic king, the knower, in sooth, of Truth,
Said: "Your words are fraught with flaw."
His face turned ruddy as a red-lotus on fire,
And he spake these words in soaring wrath: (124)

40\. "Let your exposition of law be, what it is;
You speak, not knowing the truth of the great nature
Of righteousness; now pray, answer me:
In which country, did ever a cow,
Besieged by such grief, come distressed,
Heaving deep sighs of agony, to the bell-tower,
And tolled the bell, and fell down on earth undone? (125)

41. "He killed a being that took birth in *Tiruvaroor*
Where abides peerlessly enshrined the Lord-God,
Hailed gloriously by *Indra*, *Vishnu*, *Brahma* and others;
So, death is the punishment meet for him;
Know this to be my well-considered verdict irrevocable." (126)

42. Having spoken thus, he added: "This indeed is that
Which suits the deed; I canst not cure the distress
Of this cow whose mind is being eaten away by grief;
It is but meet that I suffer too in a similar way."
Thus resolved the blamless sovereign; his ministers
Were struck with fear, and away they moved. (127)

43. The king sent for his son and bade a minister
Ply in that street a chariot that would run over the prince;
He did not do as bidden, but chose to put an end
To his dear life by his own hand; the king
Then took his son with him and repaired to that street. (128)

44. He would not consider that the prince
Was his only son to perpetuate his race;
His sole duty lay in treading the path of *Dharma;*
He laid his son on the street and he -- King *Manu* --,
Drove the car whose wheels ran over the chest of his son.
Is kingship aught that is easy or common?
Is it not a rarity of rarities? (129)

45. Taken aback by the act of the king,
The merciful, white-parasolled monarch,
Men on earth rained tears and the celestials, flowers;
The Lord *Veeti-Vitangka* appeared on his young Bull
On the very street, adored by the celestials,
And gave *darshan* to the great and glorious soul. (130)

46. A young crescent decked His locks;
The third eye unique was on His forehead beauteous;
His frame on the left bore Mother *Uma's* form;
Bhootas, thronging gloriously, encircled Him;
Thus the Lord appeared before the adoring king;
The Lord enthroned on the Bull
Showered on the valiant king grace infinite. (131)

47. That very moment, the dead calf, the prince peerless
And the minister too were brought back to life;
The King by no means could reckon his joy;
Is there aught impossible for the Primal Lord
If He means to be the Implementer? (132)

48. The King embraced in delight his son divine
Who fell at his feet in adoration;
He was freed clean of his great grief.
Gone was the sorrow of the cow whose udder swelled
As the calf sucked in joy its sweet milk
Which overflowed and drenched the earth. (133)

49. Beholding the gracious mercy of the Lord, -- the One
Enshrined in the *Poongkoyil* at *Tiruvaroor*
From whose forted walls issues golden lustre --,
Conferred on *Manu* -- the victorious king --,
So openly and in a street,(to this very day),
All the seven worlds hail the glory of His grace
Which is for ever easy of access to His devotees. (134)

50. Such grace was meted out to innumerable men
Poised in *Dharma*, and thus was the hoary citv
Blessed by the Lord in blissful grace;
Can ever our words match its glory?
The Lord's Flower-Temple was very like its corolla! (135)

Stanza	Line		
1	5	Vanni	: Prosopis spicigera. Its leaves are sacred.
5	1	Rudra-Ghanika	: A dancing girl who dedicates herself to the service of Rudra Siva.
6	1	The Hog	: Vishnu.
		The Swan	: Brahma.
	4	cf. "..... Vaittha tiruth thunaivanotum Senra vazhi inralavum thulavam narum Sethu tharisanam Seythan thiral vallone." - Villipputhoor Azhwar.	
8	3	Padikam	: The hymns usually ten in number, of Saivite Saints.
9		The comparison is between the traders' streets and the sea.	

a) Jewels are displayed in the shops and they sparkle with splendour. Even so the well-lit vessels on the sea shine with brilliance.

b) The streets are noisy. The roar of waves in the main is also noisy.

c) Even as the streets are filled with merchandise the sea-borne ships are full of them.

10 3-4 The feet of the celestials never touch the ground. Even so, the wreaths forming part of festoons dangling in the air touch not the ground.

Ananku-Adal : A festivity.

cf. "Peranangku atal seythu peruvizha
Yetuttha pinrai."

- The Puranam of Kannappa Nayanar

14 Part of the first line of the original can also be rendered thus: "For all lives on earth he is indeed the Karpaka tree -- vazh-taru -- ".

This Ruler : Manu-Niti' Chola.

The eye and soul : A typical example of the advaitic relationship between the soul and God, in Saiva Siddhanta. The eye is a mere lens. It can't see by itself. It must be animated by the soul. Even so, the human soul is to be animated by God. See sutra 11, Siva Gnana Bhotham.

3-4 Vedic Saivism holds that the celestials gift us with seasonal rains. They subsist on the offerings made in the sacrifices performed on earth. Cows gift us with milk, ghee etc., which are the materials offered in the sacrifices. The Brahmins perform the sacrifices. The king provides them with the wherewithal. So St. Tirugnana Sambandhar hymned thus:

"Vazhka Antanar Vanavar Aninam
Veezhka thann punal Ventanum ongkuka
Azhka theeyathu; ellam Aran namame
Soozhka, vaiyakamum thuyar tneerkave."

15 1 Royal disc : Symbolic of sovereignty.

5 Grand Manu : The first Manu, the divine author of all laws in general and the *monarchic code in particular.*

16 1 Vanmika Natha : The Lord who manifested from the Ant-hill. A chthonic element is supposed by David Dean Shulman. See pages 110-131, Tamil Temple Myths, 1980.

21 Soota : A court minstrel; it is he who sings the aubade and wakes the king at dawn.

Magata : A minstrel who hails the heroic deeds of the king.

33 2 Noble : It means "ignoble" in the present context.

44 6 cf. "Uneasy lies the head that wears the crown".
- Shakespeare.

45 Potri-p-pahrodai praises the act of the king thus:

" .... even as the Monarch
Who ran his car o'er his son to purge him
Of his killing a calf caught in his car .... "
- Tr. T.N.R.

47 4 cf. "Is anything too hard for the Lord?"
- Genesis, 18:14.

A paraphrase of line 4 will be as follows:

"Is there aught impossible of fulfilment
If the Primal Lord Himself wills it done?"

50 5 Its : The City's.

From the inscription dated 31.5.1123 found on the northern wall of the second enclosure (prakaram) of Tiruvaroor Thyagarajaswamy Temple, we learn that the names of the prince, the minister and the cow were respectively Priyavruthan, Ubayakulamalan and Surabhi. This inscription was made during the reign of Vikrama Chola (1118 A.D. - 1135 A.D.) This king was none other than the father of Anapaya whose Chief-Minister was Arunmozhi Thevar (St. Sekkizhar).

Additional Notes:

1. A stone-car, ikons of the cow and the calf and also a bell are still kept in the Tiruvaroor Temple precincts.

2. The piety as well as justness of King Manu is unexampled.

3. "Reverence for life" is the lesson we learn from the life and reign of King Manu.

4. A just and impartial ruler can talk with God and walk with God.

4. The Glory of the Holy Company

1. The Lord of *Bhootas* is of the Ant-Hill and is
Also the Primal Lord; in His Flower-Temple
Is the great and bright and beauteous courtyard;
Here is the *mantapam* called *Devasiriyan*
Abutting the forted wall and entrance-tower. (136)

2. *Brahma* of the lotus-flower, *Indra* and *Vishnu*
On whose bosom dwells *Lakshmi*,
And other gods for ever abide here
In *Devasiriyan*, the *mantapam* divine. (137)

3. By the blaze of the white lustre that issues
From the holy ash, duly worn by the devotees
Who can set at nought the misery of all beings,
By its sheer purity, and by the resounding
Everywhere of the protective *Panchakshara*,
It is like a confluence of many a milky main. (138)

4. It is the devotees who adore nought but the feet
Of the Lord, -- the Author of all the worlds --,
Who are entitled to rule all the worlds;
To hail them and to be ruled by them,
Men from all the worlds here assemble.
So it is like all the worlds duly juxtaposed. (139)

5. The devotees are made servitors as willed by the Father;
In love are they thrilled with mysterium tremendum;
They ply their hands for ever in the Lord's service;
With these were also companied innumerable devotees. (140)

6. Flawless *rudraksha*-beads deck their frame;
Pure are they inly too, like the holy ash they wear;
By their lustre they make all the directions radiant;
Their glory is indeed ineffable. (141)

7. Even if the elements five should quake,
They swerve not from their adoration
Of the flower-feet of *Ammai-Appar;*
They stand rooted in *bhakti* hailed by the holy ones;
They are flawless hills of piety. (142)

8. They are the ever-blest who have beyonded
Both prosperity and adversity;
Ruddy gold and potsherds, they view alike;
Adoration of the Lord in love is their sole goal;
They seek not even *Moksha;*
Such is their firmness of purpose. (143)

9. Their wreaths are wrought of *rudraksha*-beads,
Their habiliments are but rags;
Service to the Lord is their sole duty, nought else.
Milk of loving kindness wells up in them;
They lack nothing. Can I ever
Describe their peerless valour in words? (144)

10. They can assume any form at will;
Unique servitors are they of the Dancing Lord;
Infinite indeed is their glory;
I am to sing their glory, mirabile dictu, but how? (145)

11. This holy company of divine *tapaswis* great
Was hailed in beauteous Tamil verse
By *Alala Sundarar* of endless glory -- my deity --;
In unison with his *Tiru-th-'tonda-th-Tokai*
We indite this, our work. (146)

Stanza	Line		
1	1	The Lord of Bhootas	: "Hail the Lord of Bhootas!" (Bhootha Pathaye Nama) is one of the 108 mantras with which Lord Siva is hailed. A description of the Bhootas is already mentioned in stanza 16. The devotee of Siva is also referred to by the word 'Bhoota'.
5	1	The Father	: Siva.
10	4	Mirabile dictu	: Marvellous to tell.

5. The Puranam of the Lord's Intercession

1. He who was claimed with a deed of servitude by the Lord
Who sports on His crown *Ganga*, crescent, snake
And *konrai*, is from the land of *Tirumunaippadi*
Where flourish damsels on whose moon-like visages serene
Are carp-like eyes which reach as far as their ears. (147)

2. In that great land, beauteous and prosperous, is a town
Endowed with the wealth of *tapas* immense
Meriting the *avatar* of him who would cause
The flourishing of the Vedic Saivism; it is indeed
Tirunavaloor, the eternal abode of Brahmins
Who would never from the path of truth swerve. (148)

3. In the clan of *Siva*-Brahmins who serve *Ammai-Appar*
In unbroken tralatitious sacerdocy, he did divinely
Incarnate, to uplift the world freed of its flaws,
As the son of lofty and noble *Sadaiyanar*
And his immaculate wife *Isaignaniyar*. (149)

4. By the grace of the Lord, he was christened *Nambi Aroorar*,
A name to be hailed even by the great *tapaswis;*
The child was decked with *aimpatai* and pretty *chutti;*
A cord of ruddy gold flashed from his waist;
Thus decked, one day he trundled a toy-car in the street. (150)

5. Him beheld the king of the realm, *Narasingka Munaiyar;*
He felt ineffable love for the child;
Fortified by claims of intimacy, he beseeched
And obtained leave to rear the child in royal splendour;
Thus was he brought up as the king's *abhimana putra*. (151)

6. He grew as the beloved son of the glorious king
Firm-rooted in the culture and tradition of his lineage;
In due time he was invested with the sacred thread;
He mastered all the boundless and hoary scriptures
And glowed with learning and wealth.
He now attained the age proper for marriage. (152)

7. Befitting the status of his great family
Sadaiyanar entreated aged and revered men
To approach *Sadangkavi* of *Putthoor*,
A noble *Siva*-Brahmin, seeking the hand of his daughter
-- A virgin, *Lakshmi*-like --, for his peerless son. (153)

8. When the revered elders of reputed clan and family
Who knew full well of the course and source of *Gotra*,
Announced the purpose of their errand
To *Sadangkavi*, he received them well, and his face
Beamed in joy; he discussed with them
All that pertained to marriage and expressed his consent. (154)

9. The elders apprised the parents of *Aroorar*
Of the consent; great indeed was their joy;
They then wrote to the parents of the bride
To announce the marriage in such a way
As would befit the greatness of the king. (155)

10. The auspicious invitation was carried by gentlemen
And women whose eyes were like carps;
They fared forth to the hoary town, *Putthoor*
Of flowery groves, and were there received,
Respectfully by its men and lotus-faced women (156)

11. They returned rejoiced, with the wedding-invitation
From the bride's house; they engaged themselves
In the great preparation for the grand wedding.
The men erected a *pandal* decked with
Flawless and fragrant flower-wreaths, and there
Was performed the ritual of *Ankurarpana*. (157)

12. The parents of the bride performed
Such rituals that they ought to, for the wedding;
On the day prior to the wedding, to the resounding
Of drums and other musical instruments
Aroorar adorned with garlands, was blessed
And decked with the holy *kappu* of gold
In keeping with the prescribed ritual. (158)

13. The wedding-rites as prescribed by scriptures great
Were that night performed flawlessly at *Navaloor*
Where is for ever heard the chanting of the *Vedas;*
Loud resounded the musical instruments.
As if to behold the splendour of the wedding
Of him, the wearer of honied garlands,
The sun rose bright at dawn. (159)

14. *Aroorar* -- the noble one of subtle learning,
The wearer of the sacred thread on his chest --,
Attended to matutine duties;
Before the hour set by the astrologers would near,
To prepare himself for the wedding ceremony
He went to the bath for ablutions. (160)

15. Perfumed oil was applied to his locks of hair;
The bathing vessels were filled with scented water
Into which were strewn fragrant flowers;
He was then seated on a seat wrought of gold
And was elaborately bathed by the attendants;
This done, they applied on the person of him
Who is dear to the Lord, perfume and powder.
Thus they made him glow with a greater beauty. (161)

16. He was then dressed in silken vestments
Perfumed with the smoke of eagle-wood;
An expert attendant plied a white towel
Through his tuft of hair and gently dried it;
It looked like the passing of the moon into the clouds;
With his clean finger-nails, the attendant
Untangled the twists in his tuft. (162)

17. Gold-dust tinct with odoriferous camphor
Was dissolved in flowery dew; the sandal-paste
Thus concocted and the perfumed powder mixed with musk
Were applied on his frame; he then wore
The sacred thread on his chest and the *pavitra*
On the annular, ritualistically. (163)

18. Various garlands woven with flawless flowers
He wore; with jewels and chains of gold and gems bright
He was decked; their lustre could chase murk away;
Thus he blazed with splendour for the wedding ceremony. (164)

19. The princely Brahmin-lad, splendorous to behold,
Invoked in his mind the divine feet of the Lord
And wore the sacred ash -- the holy of holies.
The goodly town wore a festive appearance;
Through this he fared forth, mounted
On a stately steed decked in gold. (165)

20. Musical instruments resounded; words of praise
Filled the air; auspicious women showered blessings;
The *Vedas* were chanted; beholders were struck with wonder;
In delight gathered many; thus, even thus, the kith and kin
Mounted their vehicles and palanquins befitting them. (166)

21. With the assemblages of Brahmins hymning the holy *Vedas*,
Men -- perfumed, garlanded and decked in gold --,
And women whose swelling *kumkum*-dyed breasts
That excelled lotus-buds and dice --,
Proceeded in all jubilee. (167)

22. It looked as though the black main was afoot
As, when the wedding-guests marched onward
White bangles of shells jingled,
Fish-like ear-pendants dangled,
Gems from jewels, in effulgence, blazed
And peacock feathers blue waved from crests. (168)

23. Many a musical instrument, one vying with the other,
Was played; *chamaras* were wafted in serried order;
Parasols were held lifted; many beauteous banners
Wafted in the wind in close rivalry;
Thus the wedding party arrived at *Putthoor;*
From that day *Siva*-Brahmins hail it
With the name, *"Manam-vanta-Putthoor."* (169)

24. Brahmins and housewives came with
Poorna-Kumbhas, censers breathing incense
And *Palikais* galore; they strewed honied flowers,
Aruku-grass, gold dust and puffed rice on their way
And sprinkled rose water scented with sandal powder;
Thus they welcomed the wedding party. (170)

25. Beholding the bridegroom a few affirmed:
"One must be blessed with a myriad eyes to behold him."
Some others said: "Among all damsels, lofty indeed
Is the askesis of *Satangkavi's* daughter!"
And some said: "Blessed are we as we witness
The wedding that gladdens the whole earth."
Melodic lays they lilted and also danced. (171)

26. Some said: "We are borne away on the flood
Of grace that flows from his eyes."
Some praised the horse that bore him thither;
Some said: "The jewelled bridegroom
Is truly an incarnation of piety."
Thus spoke the women that gathered there. (172)

27. *Aroorar* that shone with bridal splendour
Arrived at the bridal *pandal* whence wafted fragrance.
As he dismounted from his steed,
White conches resounded like thunder-clouds.
I am now to narrate the unique incident of the wedding;
Such narration spells my salvation. (173)

28. At *Kailas* where the chanting *Vedas* ever abide,
The Lord in grace assured of His intercession;
The unique one unknowable to the two bewildered
Who flew up and burrowed deep down, thither came. (174)

29. He concealed His third-eye, bright were the stripes
Of His Holy Ash like a pure white garment;
Bound in a knot dangled loose His grey hair
White as the rays of the full-grown moon. (175)

30. His ear-pendants of *rudraksha* dangled low;
The sacred-thread lay on His beauteous chest bright;
The mantle on His shoulder waved in the wind;
He held aloft an umbrella shielding the sun. (176)

31. Accentuating the ancientness of His loin-cloth low lying
His dhoti covering it beautified it.
Toddling he came holding a bamboo-staff on whose top
Were tied *dharba* and a cloth of white. (177)

32. "Is it the embodiment of mellowed beauty great?
Or is it the true form of ripe old age?
Or the very form of the genesis of the holy *Vedic* way?"
The wondering beholders were doubt-tossed! (178)

33. At the *pandal* where the wedding was about to commence
He arrived and stood fronting *Aroorar* and the assembly.
"Hearken to these, my words, O ye all!"
Thus He, whose holy lips hymned the hoary *Vedas* infinite. (179)

34. Him beheld the innumerable Brahmins,
And the bridegroom, verily a lion, spake to Him thus:
"We bid you a warm welcome; your coming here is
The fruition of our *tapas;* speak what you intend to speak." (180)

35. The Lord in disguise addressed *Aroorar* thus:
"You had better resolve first the great dispute
That subsists betwixt us for a long long time
Arising out of an agreement, and then proceed to wed." (181)

36. When thus the Forehead-eyed spake, the peerless one
Said: "If there be betwixt us a pending *lis*
I will not wed before it is concluded; state your case
That it may be resolved (betimes)." (182)

37. Then spake the Infinite One: "O Brahmins!
Hearken to this! I affirm that this *Arooran* is my slave."
Thus he who had enslaved severally
The celestials, *Vishnu*, *Brahma* and all other worthies. (183)

38. When they heard Him speak thus, they that stood there
Or sat, thought thus: "What means he, by his words?"
Some neared Him; some grew wroth and some laughed.
"Nobly spoken!" said *Aroorar* and sneered at Him. (184)

39. At the jeering face of *Aroorar*, He stared; He trembled
And shook in wrath; He restored the mantle that fell down
To His shoulder, and nearing *Aroorar* shouted thus:
"Behold this 'Deed of Servitude'
Executed by your father's father!
Sirrah! What's the meaning of your railing and laughter?" (185)

40. The scion of the flawless race faced Him; he grew soft
As hoary love somewhat melted him;
He ceased his laughter, and said:
"Amongst Brahmins, pure and flawless,
Can there be enslavement of a Brahmin by a Brahmin?
Only you could speak thus.
Are you, peradventure, demented? (186)

41. "Maybe I am a demented person or even a demon;
I am not to be abashed by your volley of evil words;
If for all this you cannot construe my nature true,
Indulge not in artful words; you had better
Serve me in truth." Thus He. (187)

42. "His form doth truly melt my heart in love;
But his maddening words do incense me at once;
He says, he holds a Deed of Servitude;
Let me first find out the truth."
Thus resolved, the devotee demanded the deed from the deity. (188)

43. When *Aroorar* said: "Show me the deed"
He replied: "Are you competent to demand it from me:
I will show it to this assembly
(And they will pass the verdict)
That you are only fit to serve me.
When He spake thus, *Aroorar* began angrily to chase
Him that was inaccessible to both *Vishnu* and *Brahma*. (189)

44. When *Aroorar* tried to wrench the deed from the Brahmin,
He ran athwart the wedding-*pandal;*
With great speed he chased and caught Him.
Who but *Aroorar* did ever catch Him,
The One whose bow with its arrow intact,
Smote the triple cities of the sky,
The One who pervades the whole universe,
As perfume the flower. (190)

45. He held him by his hand, whose flower-feet
Are held by the hymning *Vedas* hoary;
He wrenched from Him the Deed of Servitude,
And saying: "When did it ever come to pass,
-- The enslaving of a Brahmin by a Brahmin?
Tore it to pieces.
The Endless One then began to complain aloud. (191)

46. He who is yet to be apprehended even by the rare *Vedas*
Which wailed aloud and quested after Him,
Held *Aroorar* tight and cried: 'Is this fair?'
The nearby kin interceded and separated them.
They said: "You wrangle on the basis of a strange *lis;*
O saintly Brahmin, pray tell us where you are from." (192)

47. Thus questioned He said: "I am only here and my dwelling
Isn't far away; it is in *Vennai Nalloor;*
Be that as it may; this lad wrenched from me
Most illegally the deed and tore it
And thus proved conclusively the fact of his slavery." (193)

48. Looking at Him that wore the concealed ear-rings,
Blemishless *Aroorar* concluded that He was indeed
A veteran-barrator, and impelled by
Spiralling love that had dawned in him already, said:
"If *Vennai Nalloor* be your place of residence,
Go with me to prosecute your false case there." (194)

49. Hearing this the Brahmin said: "Well, if you
Choose the forum of *Vennai Nalloor,* it but suits me;
There, before the tribunal of holy Brahmins,
I will exhibit the original deed, the primary document,
And prove to the hilt your state of servitude."
Then he walked ahead supported by his staff. (195)

50. Like iron by magnet drawn, hied in great speed
Aroorar after the Brahmin; him followed
His numberless relations anxious to know the result;
All of them eventually arrived at *Vennai Nalloor,*
The habitat of Brahmins poised in piety. (196)

51. Appearing before the court of the worthy Brahmins
The Brahmin-Chief preferred his complaint *thus:*
"*Arooran* of celebrated *Navaloor,* tore the deed
Which testified his willing servitude to me.
He is now before you for being adjudged." (197)

52. The spokesman of the tribunal spake thus: "Sir,
This wide world knows not of a Brahmin's enslavement!"
Thereto the Brahmin that stood apart, replied thus:
"This case stems from consent; the deed
That he tore, was executed by his father's father." (198)

53. Addressing *Aroorar,* the learned judges said:
"Would it spell success for you, if you violently tore
The deed embodying a voluntary agreement?
The one that is so old that all his flesh
Is shrunk, hath truly presented
The quintessence of his case; how do you counter it?" (199)

54. "O ye learned judges that know me to be an *Adi-Saiva,*
Should this Brahmin assert that I am his slave,
It is indeed *maya* that lies beyond the pale of mentation;
What can I say? I canst not con what he means."
Thus he, sunk in a malebolge of despondency. (200)

55. When *Nambi Aroorar* replied thus in the Court,
The holy Brahmins addressing the Vedic Muni said:
"The onus is heavily on you to prove your phenomenal case,
Claiming in this world the lad as your slave." (201)

56. They added: "For proof, you should cite
One of these three: custom, document or oral evidence."
Thus addressed, the One well-versed in *Maya* said:
"The one torn in wrath was but a copy; I have with me
The original to be exhibited before this Hon'ble Court." (202)

57. The judges said: "Show us then your deed."
The Brahmin replied: "I will, if you be pleased
To order him not to indulge in destruction as before."
Thereupon the judges said: "We will permit no evil here."
The Redeemer then approached the judges with His deed. (203)

58. When He who had concealed His blue throat, showed the deed,
The court-clerk received it in deferential reverence;
As ordered by the judges he retrieved it from its cover,
Found it to be an ancient scroll and read aloud
Its contents that all in the assembly might hear it clearly. (204)

59. "This deed of an *Adi Siva* Brahmin -- *Arooran*
Of *Navaloor* --, witnesseth as follows:
I and all those that come in my line, shall serve
Peru Muni alias *Pitthan of Vennai Nalloor,*
From generation to generation; this deed is
By me executed willingly and voluntarily;
In witness whereof I have set my signature." (205)

60. They examined the signatures of the attestors
And found them to be true; addressing *Aroorar*
The flawless judges said: "Sir, you now examine
The signature said to be your grand-father's
And find out if it is truly his." (206)

61. When thus the judges ruled, the voluntary Redeemer
Of souls, said: "Is this fellow competent
To adjudge the genuineness of the signature?
If there be any other of his grand-father's
You may kindly compare that with this, and pass the verdict." (207)

62. The court agreed to the course suggested.
To dispel the bewilderment of *Arooran*
They sent for the document signed by his grand-father,
Kept in safe custody, and compared the signatures.
Both the signatures were identical;
Thereupon the Court declared:
"Nothing now remains for us to do." (208)

63. The judges addressing Nambi *Aroorar* said:
"You've lost your case against the Brahmin-*Muni;*
'Tis your duty to serve him dutifully."
"If this be the verdict" said *Aroorar,*
"Decreed by law, can I demur?" (209)

64. Then the learned Assembly of Brahmins
Addressing the saintly Brahmin said: "O rare Brahmin,
The deed that you showed us describes you as one
Native to our glorious town; if it be so,
Show us your house of hoary lineage." (210)

65. The holy *Muni*, the winner of the peerless case, said:
"If none of you know me, then follow me."
Followed by the thronging Brahmins and *Aroorar*
He walked ahead and entered *Tiru-Arul-Turai*
And there disappeared abrupt; others stood perplexed. (211)

66. When the Lord entered the Temple, by love impelled
Aroorar followed Him, and wondered:
"Why should this Brahmin enter the Temple of our Lord?"
When alone he pursued Him, and called Him aloud,
The Lord appeared on high, mounted on His Bull
And apprised him of the truth thus: (212)

67. "You were Our servitor formerly; as on women you set
Your mind, you came to be born on earth
By Our fiat;
That life full of misery may not become your lot
We followed you, interceded and claimed you
In the presence of pious Brahmins." (213)

68. When *Aroorar* heard these redemptive words
He cried like a calf that heard its mother's lowing;
In every pore of the limbs in his body, he felt thrilled.
He folded his hands above his head in adoration
And burst out thus: "O the grace! The grace
Of the divine Dancer of compulsive redemption!" (214)

69. At the manifestation of grace divine
All the five celestial *Tuntupis* resounded;
Gods on high caused showers of flowers to fill the earth;
Rejoiced were dwellers on earth; the *Vedas* hymned aloud;
Then the Lord that redeemed by a bond, spake thus in grace: (215)

70. "You wrangled with Us and so you have earned the name
'The Wild Devotee'; true worship in exceeding love
To Us is, hymning; so hail Us on earth
In Tamil hymn and song and solemn strain."
Thus spake He whose holy lips hymn the *Vedas* pure. (216)

71. The Lord invisible to searching *Vishnu* and *Brahma*
Revealed Himself when they hailed Him with *Panchakshara*,
He being its true import; when He commanded *Aroorar*
To hail Him in psalm and number, he invoked
With all his heart, the dancing feet beauteous
Of the Lord and folded his hands in adoration. (217)

72. "I knew not the gain I would get by Your grace
When You as a Brahmin came to win Your case;
Yet You redeemed me, investing me with awareness;
You are the flawless nectar, a great sea of Virtue.
What do I know? How am I to sing You?" thus he. (218)

73. The Lord eyed His devotee graciously and said:
"You did call me a mad man; call me so
And commence your hymning." Thus told,
Great *Van-tondar* began to hail the Lord-Redeemer in verse. (219)

74. The Lord shares in His frame His Consort
Whose locks are decked with bunches of blooms.
Unto His devotees He is sweeter than the mother true.
Him, the Lord of *Navaloor* great, hailed thus:
"O Mad One, the Wearer of crescent in the crest!"
Thus he opened the great and divine decad
That the whole universe
Inclusive of this world
Might stand redeemed. (220)

75. In *Maruda* of the hoary tradition is *Indala;*
In its classification of *Mudal* poised in flawless purity,
Befitting the harmony at the base of its threefold division
And in keeping with the Time and the Grammar of music,
He, the peerless master of music, sang,
And God was pleased. (221)

76. Listening to the dulcet decad of Tamil
Melodiously rendered by His devotee, the Lord said:
"May you continue to hymn our manifold praise."
Thus the Lord, the Smiter of the triple skyey cities,
Enshrined in *Tiru-Arul-Turai* of *Vennai Nalloor*
Graciously commanded him in compassion true
That all the worlds might be blessed with His redemptive grace. (222)

77. Others would perhaps pursue external paths
Of askesis; the marital life of the daughter
Of the *Putthoor* Brahmin ended on the very day of her wedding;
Poised in the meditation of her peerless lord for ever,
And thus oned with him, she easily gained
Sempiternal *Sivaloka* at the end of her life on earth. (223)

78. After his enslavement by the Lord of *Vennai Nalloor*
Enshrined at *Tiru-Arul-Turai*, *Nambi Aroorar*
Came to *Tiru Navaloor* dight with vast flowery tanks,
And hailed the Lord of gods in psalms and verse. (224)

79. He then left for *Tiru-th-Turaiyoor* where *Siva* bides,
And arriving at His Presence, hymned thus:
"You did prevent me from treading the evil path;
Deign to grant Your slave the righteous path of *tapas*."
Thus he sang the decad divine that annuls
The cycle of birth and death for mankind. (225)

80. The Lord granted him in grace the life of *tapas*
Which prevents the senses from misleading.
Thus blessed, *Van-tondar* folding his hands
In loving adoration of *Siva's* beauteous feet
Hymned and performed *Siva Pooja* at *Tiru-th-Turaiyoor*
Girt with flowery gardens fragrant, where the Lord
That sports on His long matted hair
The *Ganga* and the crescent, is enshrined. (226)

81. He bowed before the Lord of *Tiru-th-Turaiyoor*,
Took leave of Him and fared forth
To many a shrine where abides in grace Lord *Siva*,
And hailed Him in adoring love; his thought
Then hovered on the Divine Dance enacted by the Dancer
At golden *Puliyoor* which he desired to adore.
Impelled by saddening love he set his mind on his journey. (227)

82. When he crossed and reached the southern bank
Of the cool *Pennai* that flows carrying on its waves
Sandal and agalloch trees swept from the mountain,
And also flowers, feathers of peacock and gems,
The day-star with his steed and mighty car dipped
Into the western main, and *Aroorar* had by then
Arrived at the outskirts of *Tiruvatikai*. (228)

83. "Our Lord, *Tirunavukkarasar*, the wielder
Of *uzhavaram* hailed by all the world,
Here abode rendering with all his heart manual service
To the Lord, the Rider of the Bull; I dare not
Set foot in the holy town." Thus he thought
And did not enter the town but put up at the *matam*
Called *Siddhavatam*, without the town and beyond the fields. (229)

84. At the *matam* girt with flowery gardens where hum
Speckled honey-bees, fixing his thought on the feet
Of the Lord enshrined in *Veerattanam* which is
Washed by the waves of the river *Gedilam*,
He with his loving devotees slid into sleep. (230)

85. As he invoked His feet, before he closed his eyes in slumber,
The Lord of *Veerattanam* took the form of an old Brahmin,
Entered the *matam* unseen, and placing His lotus feet
On the crown of Aroorar, lay as though He slept. (231)

86. *Aroorar*, woke up and said: "O holy Brahmin!
Your feet are resting on my head." To this He replied:
"It is my dotage that bewilders my sense of direction.
Satisfied with the reply, *Aroorar*, the lord of Tamil,
Resting his head elsewhere, began to sleep. (232)

87. Even there He stretched His feet and touched
Again and again, the head of the lord of *Navaloor* which is
Girt with fecund fields where leap ruddy carp galore.
He then addressed Him thus: "You've been pressing
My head repeatedly with your feet; who are you?"
Then the Lord whose matted hair conceals the *Ganga*, said:
"Don't you know?" And He vanished on a sudden. (233)

88. "O what have I done in my prideful folly?"
He rued his conduct, and was anon becalmed;
Hailing the feet of the Lord, the One who peeled off
The hide of the tusker and wore it, the Lord
Of *Veerattanam* enshrined in *Tiruvatikai*,
Sundarar hymned the decad beginning thus:
"Can there be a race that knows not its leader?" (234)

89. With delight great he bathed in the divine *Gedilam*
-- The *Ganga* of the South --, that bears on its waves
Gold, gems, ivory white, pearls flashing like lightning,
Fragrant flowers and sandal of sweet scent,
And with these as offering, adores the shrine of *Tiruvatikai*. (235)

90. Having hailed the feet of the Lord there, he took leave of Him
And moved on the southern bank of the divine river
And reached *Tiru Manikuzhi*, where red-eyed *Vishnu*,
Who, of yore, begged of the martial emperor *Maha Bali*
In his sacrifice, to gift him with that much of land
Which he could cover by taking three steps;
Here in the shrine *Nambi* adored the Lord. (236)

91. He hailed there the Supreme Lord and adored His feet;
Then he came to *Tirutthinai* nakar and there hailed the Lord
Who grants boons to them that worship Him.
Having hailed Him in Tamil verse, rich and great,
He left the town and reached the outskirts of *Tillai*
Which is ever full of the music of stringed *yazh*,
The beat of *muzhavu*, the chanting of the *Vedas*
And the melodic lilt of celestial damsels. (237)

92. The Lord of *Tillai* does away with the triple *malas*
Of devotees who hail Him, and grants them Heaven.
Tillai is girt with tanks where red-lotuses wave their heads
As carp-fish dart across them, and bees and waterfowls
That wing nearby, hum and chirp;
From the tank, wave-tossed conches and *malanku* fish
Pass into fields and fill them.
Sundarar on whose chest dangle gemmy garlands
And garlands of honied lotuses,
Reaching the border of *Tillai*, stood there, adoring it. (238)

93. They glowed with greater glory than even the celestial realms
-- The fields, the groves and the gardens without *Tillai* --;
Sundarar crossed these which were thick with
Stately trees: jambolan, mango, *makizh*, *saralam*,
Coco-palm, clove, citron, areca, *kumkum*, plantain cool,
Iluppai and *vanchi* dense; in the lofty groves
That touched the cloud-*mandalas*, *kuyils* warbled. (239)

94. *Sundarar* of fragrant garland adoringly crossed
The many-flowered and hallowed gardens galore
Flourishing with *vanni*, *konrai sura-punnai*,
Shanbhaga, *aram*, *murukku*, *serunti*, *mantara*, *kura*,
Punnai fragrant, *parijata*, *patiri* and *vilwa* trees
And dense-growing *jati*, *mallikai* and *mullai*
And *nandhyavarta* and *alari* plants. (240)

95. To the beholding of His Consort unique that shares
His frame on the left, and for the redemption
Of lives that abide in all the seven worlds
The Lord dances in this holy shrine, and the sound
Of His anklets is hailed by the four *Vedas*.
The sea-like moat desiring to hail Him, cinctures *Tillai*;
Over its lofty fortressed walls rest *nimbi*.
Sundarar beheld these on his way, and was delighted. (241)

96. The Lord is indeed the Dancing Nectar
And the Vedas coveting It resound aloud.
From the moat girt with a hill-like and encircling fort
Rise beetles from lotus-flowers, and get
Smeared with the dense pollen from the fragrant screw-pine;
As they wing in the wind and hum, they are
Like unto devotees who wear the holy ash;
Sundarar beheld this in bliss and moved on. (242)

97. Here the *Vedas* are cultivated and chanted
For the illumination of the whole world;
White flags waft aloft here, and bells resound;
Here meet the directions in opposition;
Of the four golden entrances to the shrine at *Tillai*
That are like the four visages of garlanded *Brahma*,
Sundarar came before that one in the north. (243)

98. Who paid obeisance first? Was it the loving devotees
That came to welcome *Sundarar*? Or *Sundarar*?
Hard to tell! Plunged in joy were they all.
Impelled by a penchant to adore the Dancing Lord
Sundarar of *TiruNavaloor* stepped into the street
Dight with immense mansions, auric and bright. (244)

99. In that divine street abides the Lord of gods;
In His crescent-laden crest the *Ganga* resounds;
The *Vedas* four are chanted aloud; nearby are
Resounded the five celestial *tuntupis* when dance
The celestial danseuses; from fragrant garlands
The melodic hum of bees resounds;
Everywhere the hymns of loving devotees
Whose eyes are tear-bedewed, resound. (245)

100. Here are huge mansions cloud-capped as in *Alakapuri*,
These are the homes of manifold joy; their pennants
Waft aloft in the wind; the homa-smoke that issues
From there, where the great yogic Brahmins tend
The religious fire, ascends the clouds
And streams like flashes of lightning. (246)

101. On the figureheads set in lofty towers, dance peacocks;
Fire churned by *arani* sticks, flashes in sacrifices;
On both sides dangle garlands and chaplets;
Vessels filled with holy water fill all pials;
Dazzling light issues from the thronging cars,
In *dharmasalas* are seen hills of cooked rice;
Water-booths are full of cool and tasty water;
In other parts of streets are eyed throngs of gods. (247)

102. It looks as though that all the beauties
-- Manifold and endless --, of the innumerable worlds,
Vast and great, have in this world, here congregated;
Such are the multifoliate riches of the interior streets
Which surround the Lord's beauteous *Ambalam*
Where the holy and pure devotees stand and hymn.
Sundarar hailed this street, and moved on. (248)

103. Great gods like *Vishnu*, *Brahma* and *Indra*
And other gods throng here; so too *munis* of great *tapas*;
Yet as the hour is not propitious for the *darshan*
They feel the regulating cane of *Nandi* and stand
Apart in joy, awaiting the auspicious time.

Sundarar folding his hands over his head in adoration
Hailed the divine and beauteous threshold through which
Pass loving devotees and *Gana-Nathas*
Without let or hindrance, and moved in. (249)

104. He then duly circumambulated and adored the *Ponnambalam*
Girt with forted walls, and the effulgent *Perambalam*, the *Meru*.
In soaring delight he moved into the divine threshold
Of *Tiru-Anukkan* fronting *Tiru-ch-Chitrambalam*
Glowing with ever-growing light divine
And enshrined alike in the *Vedas* and the hearts of devotees. (250)

105. *Brahma* and *Vishnu* quested after the Lord;
He dances -- and His anklets of the *Vedas* resound --,
In the *Ambalam* that the cosmos may thrive;
With hands folded in worship, eyes shedding
Tears of joy, and inner sensorium all athrill,
Impelled by love, *Sundarar*, the prince of *tapas*
Proceeded and came near the divine flight
Of steps yclept *Tiru-k-Kalitru-p-Padiyar;*
Here he prostrated worshipfully, and rose up. (251)

106. Great senses five merged in the eyes;
Measureless *antah-karanas* four merged in the *Chinta;*
The three *gunas* were now but pure *Satwa;*
Thus bloomed *Sundarar* in peerless joy,
Poised in the bliss of the non-pareil dance divine
-- Enacted in the blissful and aeviternal Ether --,
Of Him whose matted hair sports the crescent. (252)

107. "O Lord of matted hair from which glows
The cool crescent! This life on earth is to me
Pure and sweet, as I have been blessed
To behold Your Dance Divine." Thus he hailed,
Whilst his eyes rained tears, and his flowery hands
Folded over his head in adoration.
Him he hailed in melodious verse,
And prostrated before Him in loving worship. (253)

108. In his presence whom the Lord of the Dance Unique
Redeemed by His intercession, was heard, by His grace,
An unbodied voice which proclaimed in ether thus:
"Come to our *Tiruvaroor* girt with fecund fields
And enriched by the *Cauvery* in whose rolling waves
Pearls are borne." *Sundarar* heard this, and rose up. (254)

109. Wearing as it were the gracious mandate
Of the Dancing Lord on his crown,
Sundarar folded his hands above his head in worship,
And bowing took leave of the Lord; then he
Went round the sacred *Tiru-ch-Chitrambalam*
And bowed, and walked through the entrance
Of the (southern) tower -- like unto the Mount of Gold --,
That rose on high, dwarfing the very skyey expanse vast. (255)

110. He tarried without the tower, and fell prostrate
On the ground with his limbs touching the earth;
Then he rose up and reached the inner street
Which also he adored; he walked through
The opulent streets and crossed the southern entrance
And reached the outskirts of the city
Where he paid obeisance to the southern bourne;
With his mind hovering on the grace of the Lord
Who wears *konrai* blooms on His matted hair
He crossed the sacred river *Kollidam*. (256)

111. Hailed by His devotees, *Sundarar*, the wearer of the sacred thread,
Fared forth and reached the outskirts of *Kazhumalam*,
The city divine, the one most glorious in all the worlds,
Which merited the *avatar* of him who grew and throve,
Fed by the nectarean milk from the divine breasts
Of Her, the bestower of all *dharmas*. (257)

112. "Into great *Pukali* where came to be divinely born
The son divine, I dare not set foot." Thus resolved,
Standing at its outskirts he hailed the city
And as he circumambulated it, with His consort
Seated on the Bull, the Lord gave him *darshan*. (258)

113. In soaring love swelling, *Van-tondar* adored Him.
"In the great deluge that ends all the worlds
Floats *Tiru-th-Tonipuram* on waves (undamaged);
He abides here even as He is in *Kailas* enthroned;
Him I beheld."
Thus he hymned the decad divine, tuneful and melodic. (259)

114. As the Lord hailed by the Rg Veda appeared before him
And anon vanished, *Sundarar* was struck with awe;
Calm he became ere long, and as Tiruvaroor lovingly
Beckoned him he paid obeisance to sea-girt *Puravam*
And came to *Tiru-k-Kollakka* where he hailed Him
With his garlands of hymns wrought of Tamil great. (260)

115. He then came to *Tiru-p-Punkoor* girt with honied gardens,
Adored its Lord with exceeding love, and hymned Him in Tamil;
He also visited many a shrine where abides willingly
The Lord whose hand displays a fawn, and reached
The bank of the *Cauvery* bounded by fragrant and flowery pools. (261)

116. In the *Cauvery* which carrying flowers and gems, shores up
On either bank golden dust, *Sundarar* plunged and bathed;
Then to *Ambar-Makalam* of flawless glory, he came,
And adored the feet of the Lord enshrined there. (262)

117. He proceeded to *Tiru-p-Pukaloor* where the Lord
Of rc·ddy and bright matted hair, abides in love,
And nailed Him; with his thought set on His grace
The Lord of southern *TiruNavaloor*, the one decked with
Golden vestments and sacred thread, reached Tiruvaroor. (263)

118. To the devotees of *Tiruvaroor* who dwell
In its beauteous streets through which cars ply,
The Lord graciously proclaimed thus:
"On Our bidding, Our loving devotee *Nambi Arooran*
Hither comes; gather ye all, to receive him in joy."
Thus spake He who sports on His matted hair
The flood and the crescent. (264)

119. When thus graciously commanded, the divine devotees
Met one another and shared the message.
"If the Lord Himself should grace us thus
Surely *Aroorar* is *Tiruvaroorar*" they concluded.
Up they rose to receive him, and it looked as though
The heavenly world itself thither thronged. (265)

120. On tops of *mantapams* and mansions
They fixed many a long and lofty flag-pole;
Festoons were hung; severed areca trees leafy
Were planted; garlands of leaves were dangled;
Severed plaintain trees were fastened to pillars;
Golden pots filled with water were kept on pials
In serried order; lamps glowed beauteously;
Thus shone in splendour each threshold. (266)

121. The bright and beauteous pials were
With sandal-paste of pure fragrance, coated;
Flawless puffed-rice, fragrant gold-dust,
Pure-rayed pearls and gems galore, were
Spread and set in pulchritudinous patterns.
Pandals cool wrought of budding blooms,
Rich in pollen, were raised; scented rose-water
Was sprinkled over the streets to forfend
The floating of dust particles. (267)

122. Auspicious psalms were hymned; loud roared
The drums like rumbling clouds;
Carp-eyed danseuses danced in each dancing-hall;
Thus came the devotees of the Lord of Tiruvaroor
To the forted entrance of *Tiruvaroor*. (268)

123. It was *Van-tondar* who first paid obeisance
To the devotees that came there to welcome and hail him;
As they passed in delight great through the streets,
He addressed them thus: "Will our Father who is
At *Aroor* deem even me a devoted servitor?
I beseech you to prevail with Him."
Thus in musical *chhanda*, singing divinely
He reached the entrance-tower of the Lord's temple. (269)

124. In front of the sky-high tower he prostrated,
And the five limbs of his person touched the earth;
He then devoutly adored the *Devasiriyan* whence wafts
Fragrance as from honied *Karpaka* blooms;
This done, in love that melted his life and limb,
He moved to the beauteous *mantapam*
That girds the adytum of the Lord of *Moolattanam*,
The Wearer of the pure *konrai* blossoms. (270)

125. Before the most ancient One of the Ant-Hill,
The Lord enshrined in the Flower-Temple,
The Ens Entium that is the staff of all,
The Lord Consort of Mother *Parvati*,
The Great One that graced him with the right
To hail His flower-feet in ritual worship,
The bard of goodly Tamil prostrated
And adored in devotion.
Thus did he come to be truly blessed
With the fruition of his embodiment. (271)

126. Love flooded and his heart melting tossed about;
Prone on earth he fell and adored Him,
Duly in five-fold and eight-fold prostration;
Love endless mellowed and welled up in him;
Oned were his goodly senses five;
Plunged and poised in the blissful flood
Gushing from the attainment of the Lord's divine feet,
He commenced his hymns, surpassingly melodious,
Of ever-during Tamil dulcet. (272)

127. By the great grace of the Lord abiding at the Ant-Hill
Wrought of the *Vedas*, spake an ethereal voice thus:
"We bless thee with Our companionship, proceed to thrive
For ever in that splendour with which thou wert
Invested in the past at thy wedding ritual when we claimed thee;
Play away thy life on earth to thy heart's content."
Aroorar hearkened to this unbodied voice. (273)

128. "O Lord of the Gospels, come to enslave me!
O Ruby divine enshrined at Aroor!
O Consort of Her whose bright eyes are carp-like!
It is indeed Your immense mercy that did
This day endow me, -- a senseless cur --,
With Your flower-fresh lotus feet!"
Thus did *Van-tondar* hail the sempiternal Lord
When he heard the words divine. (274)

129. Thus he hailed Him again and again in ways variform;
His bosom swelled in delight great;
He walked like a triumphant bull
To the shrine of *Veedhi Vitanka;*
Him he hailed devoutly, the grantor of life eternal;
Then he moved away, circling the sacred shrine.
From that day, all the devotees of Siva
Called him: "The Lord's Own Companion." (275)

30. By the grace of the blue-throated Lord,
Sundarar -- the Lord of ever-during Tamil --,
Wore all the comely insignia of Saivism
And decked himself with sandal-paste
And garlands of flowers and gems;
He was indeed robed in true splendour,
And lo, he looked the Prince of *Tapaswis* great.
He hymned daily the Lord of the Ant-Hill
In song and psalm, and flourished in soaring joy. (276)

131. Long before his coming to the city of limitless holiness
Kamalini of swelling breasts, one of the two
Damsels of perfumed locks -- that served Her
Who shares the frame of the Lord of *Kailas*,
Took birth in *Tiruvaroor*. (277)

132. She was born as the lustrous gem of her clan
Of *Rudra Ganikas* -- women that never marry.
The ritual of christening was fixed for her
On a holy *Adira*-day dear to the Wearer of the crescent.
She was decked with jewels and named *Paravaiyar*
By holy men well-versed in the *Sastras*. (278)

133. Even from the day of her birth, her kith and kin
Prayed for her welfare, and decked her with a talisman.
Her each *parva* was celebrated appropriately;
They deemed her as the One enthroned on the Lotus;
To their great joy she reached the *parva*
When a child gently walks toddling. (279)

134. "Is she a tender fawn? Or a bud of *Karpaka*?
Or honey sweet? Or a tender coral creeper
Of the billowy sea? Or a young crescent bright?
Or a bow of *Manmata* which, he as a stripling
Learns to wield?" Thus wondered the beholders. (280)

135. Day by sweet day, grew her excelling beauty;
Her play-things were soft *kazhanku* and various balls;
She played *ammanai* and sported on the swing;
As she sang songs befitting her game, listeners
Could divine in those melting psalms, an aching love
For the feet of the Goddess of snow-clad Himavant. (281)

136. From childhood she passed into tender girlhood
And thence she bloomed into a lovely lass;
Her beauteous breasts excelled the *konku* buds
And were truly the treasure-troves of *Manmata*.
(While thus she grew in physical splendour)
Her mind flashed to her, now and then,
Her former state, and thus she flourished. (282)

137. As usual one day, to hail in loving devotion
The Supreme One of the Flower-Temple, she set out
With her companions encircling her, and circled
The sacred street which was panoplied in extensive light;
The fragrance from her locks filled all the directions. (283)

138. Her anklets tinkled thus: "These feet have vanquished
The earth." Her *kanchi* loud proclaimed:
"This hip hath vanquished the Nether World of *Nagas*."
Bees buzzed thus: "These locks like nimbus have
Subdued the heavens." Thus fared forth *Paravaiyar*. (284)

139. After adoring the Lord of the Ant-Hill, when Nambi
Encircled by devotees was returning,
-- Lo, it was the work of Providence --, he beheld her
Of fair white teeth and ruddy lips,
And whose forehead was a bow and eyes, spear-like. (285)

140. "Is she a flowery twig of the *Karpaka* tree?
Is she the great and glorious beatitude of *Kama*?
Is she the holy of holies? Is she a fragrant liana
Wrought of bow, lily, coral, lotus and moon as flowers,
And decked on top with a lovely dark nimbus?
Is she a sheer marvel? Or 'Grace of *Siva*' embodied?"
Thus he wondered and even thus he mused. (286)

141. "Is she the ruby lamp conceived by *Brahma*
And by him embosomed to solace himself
As he could not paint a form like hers?
She that stands thither is for sure, the fru.t
And fruition of lives in all the three worlds!"
Awe-struck stood the prince of poets; betwixt them
Stood *Manmata* with all his weaponry. (287)

142. Her eyes that roll like fish and reach her ear-rings
Wrought of pearls serene and gems rare,
Burgeoned in wonder; on the hero dazzling with
Gems and jewels, *Paravaiyar* cast her look;
-- Even she who knew nought but
The grace of the God of gods!
She was indeed prompted by Providence to behold him. (288)

143. His beauty and form exceed the ken of eyes;
Rays of lustre flooding from his divine body
As light immense extend beyond the heavens;
When his look was met by *Paravaiyar's*, the soft one,
Illimitable love -- hitherto unfelt --,
Welled up in her smiting her sense of shame,
Gentle folly, dread and repugnance,
-- Her virtues four --, unequalled by women on earth. (289)

144. "Is he -- the one before me --, Lord *Muruka*?
He is robed in such superb effulgence!
Or is he peerless *Manmata*?
Or a *Vidhyatara* decked with ethereal garlands?
Or one blessed with the true grace of the Great One
Whose ruddy matted hair flashes lightnings of gold?
Who may he be -- the one that hath
Subverted my mind?"
Thus she mused. (290)

145. Though by reason of her measureless love for the noble one
Her inly virtues four were a trifle unhinged,
They yet infused her of perfumed locks,
With strength, and prodded her to move on steadfast
Holding firm to the love of adoration
For the Lord who has an eye in His forehead. (291)

146. Nathless the encircling obstruction of darts
Of *Manmata* who wielded them from all sides,
Paravaiyar from whose melliferous garlands
Bees buzzed, moved into the golden temple
Of the Lord enthroned in the Flower-Temple. (292)

147. Beholding this, *Van-tondar* queried thus:
"Who is this beauty -- a bird of Paradise,
Red-lipped and liana-like --, that hath my mind captivated?"
To him they that were there replied thus:
"She is called *Nangkai Paravaiyar* who is
Not to be attained even by the celestials." (293)

148. "Ha, her name is *Paravai!* if her womanliness
Be contemplated, even celestial danseuses
Coveted by the immortals, should hail her
As their deity; her rows of teeth -- mullai-buds --,
Excel even the pearls of her nose-ring;
Her beauty is such as is even to be praised by *Lakshmi;*
My love for her, caught and tossed and drawn
By her soft mien and divine bearing
Is immense as the seven ocean-streams." (294)

149. Thus he thought of her in manifold ways;
Bound in love with her by hoary Providence
And by the grace of the Lord, he mused thus:
"I'll anon go to my Lord who rules me
As His good servitor." With a joyous heart, *Nambi*
Hied and entered the temple of the God of gods. (295)

150. Even before he entered the temple, *Paravaiyar*
As was her wont, had completed her sacred round;
She hailed and adored the Lord, and departed
Through a different way; he bowed at the feet
Of Him who wears snakes for garlands;
Driven by love, great and compelling, he prayed
Unto the Lord to gift her to him. (296)

151. Having thus prayed before Him, *Aroorar*
Returned from the shrine of the blue-throated Lord
That abides at the Ant-Hill.
"O whither did she go
The swan, dear as my life?"
He wondered and commenced his quest
After the liana-like damsel
Of ruddy lips and bright and white teeth. (297)

152. "To snap the bond of *Karma*, swells in me a love
To serve the Lord; but now I am afire with a new desire
Which in sooth subdues even that love;
It hath eke bewildered my steadfast mind;
She is sure the grace of God; whither has she gone? (298)

153. "I knew not, and trusted not, aught
But the feet of the Lord of gods;
I stand awe-struck by her
Who hath forcibly confounded me;
She swayed like a creeper and moved away;
Which way did she -- my Lord's grace --, wend her way? (299)

154. "His ankleted feet control bondage and release;
My *chinta* for ever contemplates His feet;
Her fawn-like looks have my senses unhinged;
Which way did she -- my Father's grace --, go?" (300)

155. Thus he spake unable to contain himself;
"Where is she, my life?" said he.
He came to the *Devasiriyan* in search of her,
The one who was liana-like, the one whose jewels
That adorned her breasts were with pearls inlaid,
The one whose locks were decked with flowers. (301)

156. He who was after her whose eyes were like blue lilies
Spoke with none, but muttered to himself:
"The Lord of *Aroor* will surely bless me with
My life -- the damsel like the one on the lotus throned." (302)

157. "She is a sea of nectar, the lightning-waisted lass,
So passionately desired by *Navaloorar* of great renown;
Behold this, I can surely pass beyond this sea."
It looked as though the sun whose car was drawn
By the seven steeds, spake thus
As he plunged into the sea. (303)

158. All the birds that spent their day on the pools
With their soft mates joyously eating their prey
Repaired to their nests and were slunk.
Thus came the dreadful evening to grieve the parted. (304)

159. Like the hearts of bawds whose feet are cotton-soft,
Like the deeds of them that practise deception,
Like the hearts of the nescient that knew not
The true import of *Siva's Panchakshara*
The great heavens did darken dense. (305)

160. "Should even *Nambi* of flawless mind grieve thus,
Who can indeed withstand the onslaught
Of lasses of lithesome hips?" Perhaps thinking so,
And flashing a smile of bright rays, the moon
Appeared before Dame Night decked with flowers. (306)

161. Feeling pity for the deeds of the base, women of noble family
Bloom athrill when they are by their beloved, touched;
Even so, *Ambals* which wilted smitten by the sun's rays
Burgeoned sweet when touched by the moon's cool rays. (307)

162. They confer on lives purity and joy and serenity;
Their lustre spreads to other worlds and abides;
Thus are they the Holy Ashes -- of the Supreme One;
The moon shone with the lustre great of the Holy Ashes. (308)

163. In the even when the water-fowls had ceased to chirp
Navaloorar was companied with love that swelled in him,
-- A gift from *Nangkai Paravai*, the lovely doll --,
And a loneliness enfolded his very life. (309)

164. "*Manmata* who was gutted with the fire
That sputtered from the divine eye of the Lord,
Now resurrecting shoots his darts at me;
Is the grace of my Father even so?" Thus he mused. (310)

165. "O moon serene! you aren't like the white moon
Worn by my Redeemer on His long matted hair
Along with the billowy *Ganga* great; you know
My agony and yet on me you pour fiery rays. (311)

166. "O sea, your waves again and again rise aloft!
Did you not, of yore, with your wavy hands present
To my Lord-Redeemer the dreaded venom?
What'll you not do unto me this day? (312)

167. "O southerly, ambrosial like Tamil,
You took birth in our Lord's *Potiyil* Mount;
You grew glorious passing through the pools
Of the *Chola* realms; where did you learn this savagery
To rage with fire and brimstone?" (313)

168. These words, and words as these, he spake;
Now let us narrate the doings of the swan-like damsel
Whose precious heart went after him,
Her lover eternal and prince of munificence. (314)

169. She hailed the feet of the Lord whose throat
Is dark like a cloud, as though she would, for her,
Through His grace secure a spouse, and returned
Circled by her friends knit to her in sweet company.
Vast love swelled in her and her hips languished
Unable to bear the weight of her breasts;
Parted from her friends, *Paravaiyar* left for her mansion, alone,
With her mind full of love for *Van-tondar*. (315)

170. The anklets worn on her pretty feet softly murmured
As if they were aware of the happenings;
Without addressing a word to anyone, she gently
Plied her steps to the terrace and there sat
On her golden bed strewn with fresh flowers
In a pavilion supported by jasper pillars
And bathed in the rays of the moon serene. (316)

171. Then it was she addressed her friend who stood nearby:
"As we went forth to adore the blue-throated Lord
He came fronting us; who is he?" She *replied*:
"He is *Nambi (Aroorar)*, the Lord's own companion,
The beauteous *Saiva* serviteur par excellence,
Claimed and enslaved by the Lord in person
Who was inaccessible to even *Vishnu* and *Brahma*. (317)

172. As she hearkened to her friend, she exclaimed:
"Is he our Lord's servitor?" Even ere she could
These words complete, her love for *Van-tondar*
Began to flood and gush forth immeasurably;
She stood denuded of her virtues four which were
Firm rooted in her in the past; all that she now bore
Was her life only; heaving deep sighs, down she fell
On her bed -- the lightning-waisted *Paravaiyar*. (318)

173. When they smeared her person with sandal-paste
Compounded with rare fragrance and sprinkled
As in a slight shower or drizzle, rose-water on her
And covered her body with cool and tender shoots
And indulged in such acts to secure for her coolth,
Those but acted as ghee poured into fire which but raged
The more; *Manmata* too bent his powerful bow
And plied her with flowery darts; lo, they were truly
Samita thrown into the sacrificial pit. (319)

174. She could get no sleep on her flowery bed;
She could not endure the wafting of the southerly;
Neither could she stand the fiery rays
Of the moon from the clouded sky,
Nor uphold her steadfastness poised in patience;
She, a pretty bird, could not bear the weight of her coiffure;
Her ruddy lips like eriodendron oped and articulated thus: (320)

175. "O ye of soft and scented locks! What may this be?
The ambrosial rays of the moon scorch me sore;
You smear me with sandal-paste and rose water;
O ye cruel ones, cease and desist; the fragrant southerly
That blows here doth rage like fire hot;
He that is blessed with the grace of the Lord
Whose matted hair sports the cool flood, the snake and the moon,
Will not deign to rescue me from this plight. (321)

176. "Methinks the night'll not end; gone are
My powers of endurance and sustenance;
My mind and bosom have gone dry; say, if I should
Become the object of such glorious happenings;
Should so many join to grieve me sorely thus?
Manmata is busy with his weaponry;
He who is endowed with the grace of Him
From whose matted hair bloom the cassia and the moon,
Knows not aught of my misery. (322)

177. "O Lord-God of *Tiruvaroor* through whose streets
Studded with flags, chariots ply gloriously!
Who but you can know of my misery?
Great indeed is my unrelieved grief!
Ganga and moon, rows of snakes and wreaths
Of white skulls bedeck Your matted hair!
You come riding the Bull! Should I grieve
Like one unendowed with Your grace?" (323)

178. Such words she spake and words as these;
Who can ever gauge the grace of the Lord-God
Who commanded *Van-tondar* and the damsel
Of dark and dazzling locks, to get born on earth?
The Lord of opulent *Tiruvaroor* unto whose shrine
Celestials come down to pay humble obeisance
Announced thus to His devotees (in their dream):
"I bid you perform their wedding." (324)

179. Appearing in the dream of ever-glorious *Navaloorar*
The Lord said: "We gift to you *Paravai* as your spouse;
This We have proclaimed to Our devotees too."
Then the Lord whose matted hair is like
Fine threads of gold -- the Rider of the Bull
And wearer of the tusker's hide --,
Materialised in the dream of the damsel
Whose gait was swan-like, and said in grace:
"Your wedding with *Aroorarn* 'll anon take place." (325)

180. The endless darkness that pervaded the hearts
Of the lovers who grieved sore smitten with love
And the murk that abode at the watches of night
Vanished as the day broke; the Lord's devotees
Gathered together and hailed Him, the unfailing source of help.
To the great delight of the Prince of *Tirunavaloor*
They fittingly celebrated his wedding with *Paravaiyar*
Whose coiffure was decked with flower chaplets. (326)

181. Pillowed on the twin-crests of her hill-like breasts golden
For full many a day, the Prince of southern *Navaloor*,
By the grace of the God of gods, was, in yogic union,
Oned with the soft one, the liana-like *Paravaiyar*
Whose waist was a flash of auric lightning. (327)

182. He caused the burgeoning of the lotus-feet
Of the Lord -- his Ruler, in his crown and heart;
He wove many a garland of Tamil hymns;
With the lightning-waisted he sported in joy;
Thus he lived, and the days rolled on. (328)

183. Such was his life with her with whom he dallied
In mansion and garden, and on the banks
Of flowery tanks and man-made monticles,
Pavilions, shady *pandals* wrought of cool pearls
And golden *divans;* yet the one great desire to hail
The Lord of the Flower-Temple (ever) dominated him. (329)

184. He wore vestments, lustrous and beauteous,
Hailed by even the celestials,
Smeared his person with the paste of sandal and soft saffron,
Decked himself with comely *sutti* and jewels
Of dazzling gems and blazed in rich splendour
That excelled even that of *Indra*'s. (330)

185. A wand of gold was held by him; his ear-lobes
Were decked with ear-rings; the sacred thread
Was worn over his chest; stripes of the holy ash
Shone from his forehead; him women beheld
And said: "These do become him, aye, very well!"
Thus he passed the street divine in Saivite splendour. (331)

186. Him followed devotees -- men and women, on both sides
And hailed him thus: "O *tapaswi* great
That hails from *Navaloor!* O devotee of Him,
The Rider of the Bull who burnt the three skyey cities!
O chief of the Brahmins of glorious and flawless *Aroor!*" (332)

187. With rams, monkeys, chanticleers, partridges and quails
Held in leash, their trainers walked in front
And also on the sides of the street addressing them
With trained words; some carried baskets
Filled with fresh flowers on their heads;
Carriers of scented nut and betel-leaves also fared forth
Through the long street along which he plied his steps,
And women that eyed him were struck by his beauty. (333)

188. Dancers who plied "pseudo-horses" decked with jewels
Ambled ahead of *Aroorar* from whose shoulders
Dangled garlands; lustre issued from his *bahu-valayas;*
Woven peacock-feathers worn on his shoulders
Yielded goodly shade; *Veda Munis* accompanied him.
Thus did he fare forth to the temple of the supreme One. (334)

189. In the *Devasiriyan-Mantapam* of the brow-eyed Lord
Had gathered, apart from the celestials, innumerable devotees;
When he eyed them, he fervently thought thus:
"O for the day when I'll their servitor become!"
He then hailed the feet of the Lord and moved in. (335)

190. "I'll sure become a servitor to the servitors!"
As thus love did impel him, he bowed before
The huge and triumphant inner tower decked with
Many a flag, and moved in, with hands folded over his head;
He was then blessed with a vision of the Lord
Who wears fragrant*Konrai*-flowers beauteous.
He bowed low and as it were, wore His feet on his crown. (336)

191. "Ha, they manifest even before me, the undeserving!
The superb honey of supreme *ananda*, vast and great,
Gushes from the lotus-hearts of devotees true,
And is for ever buzzed over by bees which are
The *Vedas* great that can confer eternal life. (337.)

192. "They danced for the redemption of the world;
They frowned to death, Death;
When they were gently pressed by the roseate hands
Of Himavant's Daughter of garlanded coiffure
They turned red and rubicund. (338)

193. "They blaze in the hearts of *tapaswis* poised in piety;
They set even the nescient straight;
They soar as light and are the inner light of light;
They are beyond the ken of *Vishnu*, the primal boar,
And *Brahma* too. (339)

194. "They are enthroned on the tusker, the *Vedas;*
They forgive my sins -- a fool --, and rule me;
They promise to forgive my sins in future too,
Your lotus feet, my Lord and God of *Bhootas!*" (340)

195. To Aroorar who hailed Him thus, the Rider of the Bull
Desiring to confer on Him that which he sought,
Blessed him with the knowledge to comprehend
The traditional servitorship of the immortal devotees;
Eke did He in grace explain to him their glory. (341)

196. "As for glory, they alone are their equals; by their servitorship
They own Me; being one with Me they have won the world;
Absolutely flawless are they; they are uniquely poised;
By reason of their love, they are immersed in bliss;
They've beyonded duality; I bid you join them." (342)

197. Thus instructed by the Lord, *Aroorar* said:
"I have attained the flawless way" and stood
Adoring in front of the Lord; then the Lord spake:
"Poised in piety, pay obeisance to them and hail them
In verse-garlands wrought of Truth unflawed. (343)

198. When thus his Ruler, the Lord-God commanded him in grace,
He that hailed from the land of *Tirumunai-p-padi*
Bowed low his head, and meekly said:
"Wherefore can I hymn and in what way?
Who am I my Lord? Do deign to grant in grace
The valiancy to hail them in hymn and psalm." (344)

199. When thus he spake, the Consort of Her,
The holy Daughter of the most hoary mountain,
To rid the world of its misery and redeem it,
Spake with that Tongue that gave birth to the Gospels;
"Sing thus: 'I am the servitor of the servitors
Of the Brahmins who dwell at *Tillai*'.
Thus, even thus, should you hail them of endless glory." (345)

200. When Van-tondar prostrated before the God
Of eternally glorious *Aroor* girt with fields,
His crown touching His holy feet, and rose up
To ply himself in the task graciously set by Him,
The first One, ever unknown to *Vishnu* and *Brahma*,
Grew invisible; sensing this, *Aroorar*
Moved toward the assembly of devotees. (346)

201. As he beheld the holy company even from at a distance
He adored them again and again; excessive love
Drove him to bow low and then rise up;
He went near them and thither stood;
He hailed the devotees of deathless heroism
And owned himself as a servitor of each one of them
And also as a servitor of the various groups of devotees.
Thus, he hymned the '*Tiru-th-Tonda-th-Tokai*' in sheer love. (347)

202. With the words articulated by his Lord
He commenced his garland of Tamil
-- *Tiru-th-Tonda-th-Tokai* --, the import of which
Is *Siva* Himself; the divine decad was sung
With that consciousness with which the God of gods
Blessed him; thus hailed by the world entire,
Our deity *Van-tondar* sang and bowed before them. (348)

203. To the great delight of the devotees of the Lord,
Nambi Aroorar moved into their midst.
In keeping with the exposition in Tamil
By the Lord's Own Companion, I humbly indite
The annals of the devotees dear to our Lord. (349)

Stanza	Line		
1		The anacoluthia of the Tamil original is perforce maintained in the translation too.	
4	3	Aimpatai	: An ornament of gold inlaid with conch, sword, disc, mace and bow -- the weaponry of Vishnu -- the protector --, worn on the chest, as a mascot.
		Chutti	: A medal-like ornament worn on the forehead.
5	5	Abhimana putra	: A son reared in love and not one's own. The person who rears the child is not to be deemed the adoptive father.
6	2	Lineage	: Ancestry.
	6	The age proper for marriage	: For a lad it is 16 years and for a lass, 12 years.
8	2	Gotra	: It is named after one of the ancient sages who is either a descendant of or himself one of the eight accredited progenitors of the human race,

namely, Agastya, Atri, Bharadwaja, Gautama, Jamadagni, Kasyapa, Vasishta and Viswamitra. Every twice-born (Brahmin) or person belonging to any of the first three castes owns one of these rishis as the original founder of his family.

11	6	Ankurarpana	: A ritual performed seven days before the wedding. Nine types of grains soaked in milk are ritualistically sprinkled into small earthen pots half filled with mud for the grains to germinate by the time the wedding takes place. Germination is symbolic of prosperous life.
12	6	Kappu	: Holy thread tied on the right hand of the bridegroom. It is a mascot. A similar thread is worn on the left hand by the bride.
14	6	Bath	: A house for bathing.
17	1	Odoriferous Camphor	: It is Pasungkarpooram, a substance, as yet not identified.
		Pavitra	: Ring.
		Annular	: The ring-finger.

19 1 Sundarar was endowed alike with kingly splendour and Brahma-tejas by reason of his upbringing and birth.

The epithet of St. Sekkizhar applied to the horse is 'Yogic'. We are told by the enlightened that the very life of Nambi Aroorar is a symbol of yoga. Again, Tirumoolar refers to Yoga as Vasi (horse), Pari (stallion) and Puravi (steed).

22 The column of moving guests is likened to the sea. The points of comparison are as follows:

1. The sea abounds in shells. The women-guests wore bangles of shells. 2 The sea is full of fishes. Men wore makarakundalas (fish-shaped ear-pendants). 3. The sea is full of gems. The guests were richly decked with gems. 4. Waves waft from the sea; peacock feathers tucked in locks and tresses waved in the wind.

23	2	Chamara	: Chowry.
	7	Manam-Vanta-Putthoor	: Puthoor to which came the wedding (party).

24	2	Poorna-kumbha	: A vessel filled with holy water.
	3	Palikai	: See stanza 157. Palikai is the small earthen pot where germinate the nine types of grains.
	4	Aruku	: Agrostis linearis according to Winslow.
28	1-2	See stanzas 38 and 39.	
	3	The two bewildered	: Brahma and Vishnu.
48	1	The concealed ear-rings	: Two glendoveers prayed to the Lord that He should be ever pleased to listen to their music. The Lord thereupon turned them into a pair of ear-rings and wore them.
65	4	Tiru-Arul-Turai (The Ford of Divine Grace)	: The name of the temple at Vennai Nalloor.
74	4	The Lord of Navaloor	: There is a pun in the original. The term (Navalar) also means: "The Lord of the Fluent Tongue".
75		Maruda	: One of the four major panns, the other being Palai, Kurinji, and Sevvazhi. Maruda rendering is done in the morn.
		Indalam	: One in the fourfold division of Maruda yazh, the others being Navir, Vanji and Seitiram. Indala is also called Vatuku. It is one of the ten ragas rendered during the day-time.
		Mudal	: One of the elevenfold musical division.
		Mummai-p-padi (Threefold division)	: They are known as Hard, Soft and Neutral. (Valivu, Melivu and Samam).
77	4	Her peerless lord	: Nambi Aroorar. We will call her yoga, Sundara Yoga.
81		Saddening love	: Love that is saddened by reason of the postponement or delay in fulfilment.

82 5-6 cf. "And the gilded car of day
His glowing axle doth allay
In the steep Atlantic stream".
- Milton, Comus, Lines 95-97.

83	2	Uzhavaram	: A little spade with which grass and thorny shrubs growing within and without holy shrines are removed. To denote uzhavaram, Stella Kramrisch uses the word 'spud'.
92	3	Malanku	: Eel.

97 The four entrances and their crests are compared to Brahma. The points of comparison are these: 1. The four entrances are likened to his four countenances. 2. Here at Tillai Vedas are chanted. Brahma too for ever chants them. 3. White flags waft aloft at Tillai. White garmented Saraswati is with Brahma.

104 The Ponnambalam:

This shrine is the adytum and is roofed of gold. This is known as Chitrambalam (Chith + Ambalam). Chith is Godly knowledge or Wisdom and its near equivalent is Gnosis. The Ambalam is the Temple, the House of the Lord. Perambalam, also called Meru, is the Shrine where Utsava Moorthis like Somaskanda are housed.

The Tiru-Anukkan-Tiruvayil : It is near the shrine where the Lord dances His cosmic dance. The cosmic dance is enacted in Chith-Sabha (Chitrambalam). Chitrambalam is hailed as Tiru-c-chitrambalam. St. Sekkizhar says that Tiru-c-chitrambalam constitutes the letter as well as the spirit of the Vedas. He says it is this which is hailed in the beginning, the middle and the end of the Vedas. Chinta is the seat of affection. It is referred to as the heart, though this is non-physical.

106 This is a hymn of anubhuti. Verbal explication even at its highest is bound to leave much to be desired. That is no reason for shirking from an honest attempt at true explication.

Intellect is but one, though the gateways thereto are five. In this sense, intellect too is described as fivefold. Its pervasion which is also fivefold was here totally concentrated in the eyes -- their vision. Sundarar but beheld the Lord-Dancer. His ears did not hear; his nose did not smell; his lips did not articulate and his skin was bereft of the sense of touch.

Likewise his fourfold antah-karanas (inner sensorium comprising chittham, manam, buddhi and ahangkaram) were all Chittham and nought else. The other inner instruments became as it were, functus officio. Again the differentiated gunas of satwam, rajas and tamas became one uniform satwam.

Sastras inform us that the three gunas activise the four antah-karanas and they in turn get knit to the senses and thus are bred multitudinous activities.

Here all other activities ceased; that which was experienced was visiòn alone. In this divinely unique stillness, the dance of bliss is witnessed. This dance indeed is the dance of dances (Aadum Kootthu), the dance of bliss (Ananda-k-Kootthu), the aeviternal dance, (Ellayil Kootthu), the unique dance (Thani-k-Kootthu), and the great and grand dance (Perum Kootthu). This is the dance that the Seers of Silence are blessed to envision. It is to this, verse 38 of Unmai Vilakkam refers:

"The great Munis of Silence destroying the threefold bond
Are poised where their egoes are done away with;
They witness the hallowed dance and are filled with bliss;
This is the dance of the Ambalam's Lord whose
form is MERCY."

Translating the central thought of the conception of Siva's dance from plastic to verbal expression, Ananda Kentish Coomaraswamy observes: "Now to summarize the whole interpretation we find that The Essential Significance of Shiva's Dance is threefold: First, it is the image of his Rhythmic Play as the Source of All Movement within the Cosmos, which is Represented by the Arch. The purpose of his Dance is to Release the Countless souls of men from The Snare of Illusion. Thirdly, the place of the Dance, Chidambaram, the Centre of the Universe, is within the Heart."

112 1 Pukali : Sirkazhi.

2 The son divine : Tirugnanasambandhar.

4 cf.

113 3 Tonipuram : Sirkazhi.

114 Puravam : Sirkazhi.

119 Aroorar : Sundarar

Tiruveroorar : The presiding deity of Tiruvaroor.

124 Tirumoolattanam is the sanctum sanctorum where the Lord of the Ant-Hill is enshrined. The shrine of Lord Thyagaraja is situate elsewhere.

133 3 Parva : Season, stage. Several parvas, beginning from the third month and ending with the twenty first mark the child's progress. These form the theme of that genre of Tamil Poesy, called Pillai-th-Tamizh.

135 2 Kazhanku : A nut-producing shrub: Gulandina bonduce; its nut(s); (molucca beans).

136 7 Her former state : The state of servitorship in Mt. Kailas.

138 This is a description from toe to crown. The three parts of her body, it is said, have conquered the triple words (viz) Swarga, Madhya, and Patala. The suggestion is that there is none her equal in all the three worlds.

Kanchi : Golden girdle or zone worn round the waist.

147 6 This line contains a beautiful hint. Sundarar as Alala Sundarar, an inhabitant of the celestial realms, could not attain her. He is to attain her only as a man i.e., as Nambi Aroorar.

148 Paravai : Sea. In this poem the word Paravai is employed seven times by St. Sekkizhar. This poem cannot be easily explicated. This stanza bears eloquent testimony to the greatness of our seer-poet, as the lord of the Tamil tongue.

V. Mahadeva Mudaliyar argues that the term "Penmaiyinil perum Paravai" means that she is Rati, the supremely beauteous Consort of the God of Love.

169 8 St. Sekkizhar says that her mind which went after Van-tondar, came back to her loaded with his love.

173 Samita : Dried peepal twigs ritualistically thrown into the fire-pit in a sacrifice.

181 Physical joy is only a symbol of divine bliss to the wise and the enlightened. Yoga is the process by which "at-one-ment" is achieved.

cf.

(Sexual joy is indeed bliss divine here;
This is consummation true;
Maya shall cease to be, henceforth.)

- Tiruvunthiyar.

186 St. Sekkizhar's phrase "Nal Tava-k-Kaliru" means "The Tusker of great askesis".

cr.

188 Bahu-Valaya : An ornament worn on the shoulder.

Bahu : (Skt.) Shoulder.

191 1 They : The feet of the Lord.

198 5 cf. "And Moses said unto God, "Who am I that I should go unto Pharaoh and that I should bring forth the children of Israel out of Egypt?".

- Exodus, 3:11.

203 2 Speaks of a beatitude, longed for by St. Manickavachakar, thus:

"Your consort dwells in midmost of Yourself;
In midmost of Your Consort You dwell;
If you Both abide in midmost of myself;
Pray, grant me the boon to dwell
In midmost of Your servitors."

- The Tiruvachakam.

TILLAI-VAZH ANTHANAR CHARUKKAM

6. The Glory of Tillai-Vazh Anthanar

"I am a servitor of the servitors
Of the Brahmins who dwell at Tillai."

- The *Tiru-th-Tonda-th-Tokai*

1. It is the beginning, the middle and the end; it is
Immeasurable by logic, and cognisable only by Gnosis;
It is light animating consciousness; it pervades all
In their manifestation as the One non-separate;
It is the male and the female; it is the illuminating Dance
Enacted in *Tillai's* Court! Praise be! (350)

2. It is beyond the ken of Imagination; its form is Mercy;
It is poised in wondrous Beauty; it abides at *Tiru-ch-chitrambalam*
As the Ether of Gnosis -- the great peak of the *Vedas* rare;
This is the Grand Dance enacted by the feet,
Ankleted and flowery! Praise be! (351)

3. Hailing (the feet of the Dancer) I'll narrate
The glories of the Brahmins of *Tillai* eternal.
They are blessed with the beatific right to serve
The beauteous Dancer, the Wearer of the Holy Ash;
All glory is contained by them; they are firm-rooted
In the service of worship; with ever-increasing love
For the Lord's feet, they flourish as *tapaswis* great. (352)

4. With beauteous ornaments rich beyond reckoning
They deck the Lord and perform the auspicious rites;
They hail the Lord with the words of the Gospels;
They render gloriously all other service, befitting them;
Service within the Lord's temple and shrine is theirs. (353)

5. Poised in *dharma*, they cultivate and master the four *Vedas*
And their sextuple components of radiant truths;
They tend the Triple Fire that lives may thrive in grace;
They are rich in their servitude divine
Of the great Lord of the Grand Dance. (354)

6. They descend of a flawless race and are impeccable;
By their sovereign acts sixfold, they have chased *Kali* away;
They deem as wealth true, only the Holy Ash;
Love of *Siva* is all that they seek after; thus they thrive. (355)

7. Flawless is their mastery of *Charya*, *Kriya*, *Yoga* and *Gnana*;
They are great in munificence and ascesis;
They are ever-poised in righteousness;
They lack nothing; poised in patience and honour
They live as householders hailed by the whole world. (356)

8. They are the divine *Brahmins* whose intellect
Hath been by *Siva* clarified; they are
Three thousand strong who have in this very life
Gained the Lord-God for their adoration.
What other beatitude are they in need of?
They alone are their equals; unique is their glory. (357)

9. Is it in our power to inscribe the limits of their glory?
Did not the Lord of *Aroor* who commanded *Van-tondar*
To compose the *Tiru-th-Tonda-th-Tokai* -- the fruit and fruition
Of the Tamil tongue that reigns in the south --,
Grace him with words divine to commence his hymn,
And these, the very subject of His words? (358)

10. May the glorious Brahmins divine of sublime *Tillai*
Hailed by all the world, flourish well in this wide world;
Hailing the gracious dance of our Father in *Tillai's* Court
We now narrate the *tapaswic* life
Of the glorious potter *Tirunilakantar*,
The truthful devotee of loving-kindness. (359)

Stanza	Line	
1	1	In Hopkins' phrase it is "home-of-all, womb-of-all".
	2	cf. Siva Gnana Botham, Sutra the sixth.

3 cf. Siva Gnana Botham, sutra the eleventh.

4 The One non-separate : The One in advaitic relationship (with all).

5 The male and the female:
cf. "This whole wide world is only he and she."

- Sri Aurobindo, Savitri.

5-6 The illumining Dance ..... Court:

cf. How can we know the dancer from the dance?"
- W.B. Yeats.

6 Tillai's Court : Chith-Ambalam.

2 1. Imagination : cf. Pasu and Pasa knowledge.

Mercy : Grace.

5 2 Sextuple components : They are the treatises on Siksha, Kalpa-Sutra, Vyakarana, Nirukta, Chandovicity, and Jyothisha.

3 Triple-Fire : Agavaniya, Dhakshinagni, and Garhapatya.

7. The Puranam of Tirunilakanta Nayanar

"I am a servitor unto the potter, Tirunilakantar"

- The *Tiru-th-Tonda-th-Tokai*

1. He was born in the potters' clan, at hoary *Tillai*
Sanctified by the Brahmins; the Lord, here
Dances His unique dance wondrous which is
Beginningless and endless, in *Chitrambalam*,
Witnessed by His Consort; well did he flourish
Hailing the ankleted feet of the Lord-God. (360)

2. He shunned falsity and stood poised in piety;
His desire was to serve the true devotees of the Lord
Who sports on His matted hair the *Ganga;*
He lived as a householder
By the world extolled; he throve established
In the real wealth of true Saivism
Deeming that alone to be the redemptive grace. (361)

3. He hailed from a clan immeasurably hoary
And made his living by making earthen vessels;
To the devotees of the Lord who wears the crescent,
He freely gifted bowls to their great delight;
Thus he throve, the young and handsome devotee.
But lo, by reason of his youth, he was incontinent. (362)

4. His wife excelled even Aruntati, the paragon of chastity;
She for ever contemplated the Blue Throat of the Lord
Which, as though it would thus reward the *tapas* of devotees,
Held the venom of the ocean devoured by the Lord;
She for ever chanted: *"Tiru Nilakantam."* (363)

5. When one day her husband returned home
Having had pleasure with a hetaira,
She could not endure it, and though she
Who was more beautiful than Lakshmi on melliferous lotus,
Discharged faithfully all the other duties, she would not
Consent to be touched by him at all. (364)

6. With a view to persuade her to give up *bouderie*,
Her loving husband did all he could and beseeched her
In manifold ways, and when he was about to embrace her,
She said: "I bid you refrain from touching us
In the name of *Tiru Nilakantam*." (365)

7. He heard the ban which he would never transgress;
For, his deep devotion to the Primal Lord's Blue Throat
Was such; the great one moved away leaving her,
And as though he were a stranger, he addressed her
Thus: "You said: 'Us'; I'll not therefore even mentally
Touch any one of womankind." (366)

8. The chaste wife beautifully performed all her duties
To her husband without ever touching his person;
They abode indoors alway, but in distinct apartments;
None was aware of the couple's celibacy. (367)

9. The young couple who alone were aware
Of the immeasurably glorious interdiction,
Held themselves irrevocably bound by it;
Years rolled on, and gone was their youth.
They grew beautifully old; though they were enfeebled,
Their love for their Lord was not a whit enfeebled. (368)

10. While thus they lived, the Lord of dazzling matted hair
Which looked like the extending shoots of fire itself,
Assumed the form of a *Siva-Yogi* to demonstrate
To the world that His devotee's way of life
Was indeed the true and redemptive way. (369)

11. He was decked in *keell* and *kovanam*; stripes of the Holy Ash
Which confer immortality dazzled from His person;
The sacred thread lay on His shoulder and chest;
From His divine forehead issued the lustre (of the Holy Ash). (370)

12. He concealed His long matted hair; He wore
Curly and bushy hair; bright was His smile
Like the rays of the moon; He held nobly
A begging-bowl in His Hand;
Thus He came to the Potter's house. (371)

13. He longingly beheld the *Siva-Yogi-Tapaswi;*
He reckoned Him as a pious devotee and hailed Him;
He received Him warmly and adored Him greatly;
His outward action manifested his inner thought. (372)

14. Deeming the Lord on whose matted hair glows the crescent
To be His devotee, he invited Him into his house
And in delight great, hailed Him duly
And stood beside Him in love abounding. (373)

15. The devotee of the Lord who wears fragrant flowers
On his matted hair entreated Him thus:
"My Lord, in what way can I serve you?"
The God of gods replied him thus: "Keep this bowl
With you Sir, and return it when I ask for it." (374)

16. "It is non-pareil; it can purify all that is
Received into it; being more valuable than gold or gem
It must be treasured with greater care;
Such is its worth; receive it." Thus He. (375)

17. The glorious devotee -- the scion of the hoary clan
Of potters --, bowed and received it;
He hastened away and kept it in a very safe place
And then came back to the Lord. (376)

18. When the bowl was thus kept guarded
The Lord who came in a Brahmin's guise took leave
Of the devotee; Him he followed to a distance
(As prescribed in the sastras), and with His leave returned.
The Lord hied back to His *Ambalam.* (377)

19. Many days passed; the Lord caused the disappearance
Of the beauteous bowl from where it was kept;
To reveal unto the world the true nature of the potter,
The devotee firm-established in the principles
Of Saivism, He came to his house as before. (378)

20. Him he received duly and adored, and said:
"That you have in grace thought of us
Marks the fruition of our *tapas*."
"Give me back the luminous bowl, I entrusted
To your keeping, in the past." Thus spake He
Who can all things grant and recall. (379)

21. When thus He spake peremptorily, he moved in
To get the bowl of the *tapaswi* rare;
Lo, it wasn't there; he was nonplussed;
He in vain questioned them that stood nearby;
He continued his search, all in vain; he stood mute
Unable to account for the gramarye of its disappearance. (380)

22. The Lord of *Parvati* that stood disguised
As a Brahmin, thundered: "What means this delay?
You went in to return quick here!"
He then came out and adored the Lord
Of blue throat and began to speak thus: (381)

23. "O my Father that wears the three-fold sacred thread!
I searched for it where I kept it and elsewhere too,
-- The wished for bowl that you entrusted to me --;
Lo, it is lost; I'll give you a brand-new one
Far superior to the old one, lost by me;
Be pleased to receive it and forgive my lapse."
Him he bowed and thus implored. (382)

24. He stared in wrath at the devotee who prostrated
And then stood before him; He said: "What's it
That you speak? Except that goodly earthen bowl
I gave you, I'll not accept even one made of gold;
Go, get me the bowl I gave you for safe-keeping."
Thus He spake, the Ancient One. (383)

25. "O great one flawless, as what you gave me was lost
I searched for it *everywhere, but could not find it;*
When I beg to offer you a different goodly bowl
Far more durable, you'll not deign to accept it
But wrangle with me; I stand jostled out of my sense."
Thus he made his meek submission. (384)

26. "What more could you do? Having coveted and committed
Theft of the article entrusted to your keeping
You play-act, and aren't ashamed of your sins;
I'll hold you tight, publish your deed,
And'll not from you part without my bowl."
Thus He spake, the ideal of piety. (385)

27. "I did not commit theft of your bowl of foison;
I did not covet it even mentally; what should I do
To prove this?" When thus he spake,
He that had concealed the venom in His throat said:
"Hold your dear son by the hand, take a dip
In a tank and swear on your innocence."
Thus spake He who is never unkind. (386)

28. "O great one, to do your bidding, I am not
Endowed with a son who can falsify your accusation;
What am I to do? Pray tell me." When he so spake,
He said: "Hold your wife, flawless and glorious,
And take a plunge in the tank thick with flowers." (387)

29. When the Lord who hath concealed His matted hair
Which conceals the *Ganga*, -- the Rider of the lovely-eyed Bull --,
So spake in grace, the potter answered thus:
"By reason of a vow alas, I canst not consent to what you say;
I'll myself take a dip into the water; go with me." (388)

30. "You return not what you received; to disprove theft
You'll not hold your wife's hand, soft as shoot,
And take a plunge in water; you are sure adamantine;
I'll now have recourse to the Court
Of Tillai-Brahmins." Thus He, and hied away. (389)

31. To the great assembly of *Tillai*-Brahmins
Of impeccable character, -- the adepts in the four *Vedas* --,
The infinite One fared forth; drawn by exceeding love
The great devotee went after him, involved in the *lis*. (390)

32. Our Lord, the Brahmin (in disguise) preferred
His complaint before the great Brahmins thus:
"This potter would not return to me the bowl
I entrusted to him; had he truly lost it
He could hold his wife by hand, take a dip
In water and be done with it; he would not do it;
Obdurate is he." Thus He. (391)

33. Concealing His matted hair of natural fragrance,
His shoulders four, triple eyes and the blue hue
Of His throat, when He, the Brahmin, spake thus,
The great Brahmins said: "O potter of sterling qualities!
Narrate truly the happenings." (392)

34. "O ye Brahmins whose chests are decked with
Sacred threads! He who is here gave to my keeping
A bowl, and said that its worth was immense;
I kept it guarded; I know not how it vanished.
It had happened thus." So spake the divine devotee
Who is not to be touched by evil, even distantly. (393)

35. The Brahmins announced their verdict thus:
"If you had truly lost the bowl of this person
Who glows with the stripes of the holy ash,
And if this giver thereof bids you take an immersion
You are bound to do it with your loving wife." (394)

36. When the great devotee of *tapas* heard the Brahmins
Pass thus the verdict, he would not disclose
His incapacity to touch his wife; he but said:
"I'll perform the immersion in a fitting manner."
He beseeched the great *muni* of *tapas* to go with him,
And then homeward plied his steps. (395)

37. He took his wife with him; to take the oath
Before the Brahmin -- *the Siva-yogi* --, he came
To the tank girt with flowery and honey-laden garden
Fronting the temple -- *Tiru-p-Pulicchuram;*
He and his wife, each holding the one end
Of a beauteous bamboo-staff descended into the tank. (396)

38. When, holding the staff, they stepped into the tank,
The Brahmin -- the wearer of the white triple stripes
Of the holy ash, addressed him thus:
"Hold your wife by hand and do the immersion."
Then to the hearing of all, expressing his inability,
He, the one flawless, narrated all the past happenings
And then into the water immersed. (397)

39. As the couple emerged after their immersion
And moved to the bank, lo, they stood transformed;
Gone was their old age; they looked lovely and young;
Celestials and *munis* rained on them the flowers
Of *Karpaka* and it looked as though they were having
A second immersion, this time, into flowers. (398)

40. As in that wondrous state they eyed the couple,
They beheld not Him -- the Author of the *Vedas* --,
That stood erewhile before them. "What may this be?"
They marvelled and were struck with mystery.
Then they beheld Him and His Consort
In the skyey expanse, on their Mount, the Bull. (399)

41. They beheld Him and with folded hands adored Him;
The celestials too that witnessed the glory of the couple,
Hailed them in love; with his wife the devotee
Praised and adored Him who was enthroned on the Bull
In the splendorous expanse of ether. (400)

42. The Lord-Dancer of the Ambalam, the God of gods, that visits
The houses of every one of His devotees to make known
Their true way of life, spake thus to the couple:
"O ye glorious beyond reckoning, who conquered
The (mutinous) flesh! Be for ever with Us
Endowed with this perpetual youth!"
The Lord then merged into His state of formlessness. (401)

43. The mighty devotee and his wife of lustrous smile,
Rosy lips, soft shoulder, and hair dark as river-bed sand,
Poised in grace, lived a rare and virtuous life
And attained *Siva-Loka*; graced with aeviternal youth
-- Rare to come by --, they flourish in bliss unending. (402)

44. Having humbly hailed to the extent known to me
The glorious devotee who was free from delusion
And who maintained the vow taken in the *Lord's* name
Without any one else knowing it in any way,
I now proceed to narrate the divine service
Of *Yeyar Pakai*, the merchant unflawed by falsity,
Of Poompukar dight with cloud-capped mansions. (403)

Stanza	Line		
11		Keell	: A string of cloth worn on waist from which is suspended kovanam.

Kovanam : A small loin-cloth.

G.U.Pope says : "An ascetic mendicant wears a very scanty cloth, suspended by a string round the waist." And that is kovanam.

15 5 Sir : The word in the original is 'Nambi' which as a noun means, an honourable gentleman. The Tamil word lends itself to a pun in the context. Nambi also means: 'trusting' 'believing'.

16 The suggestion is that the begging-bowl of Siva is an all-purifier. The soul must empty its all into that bowl.

17 The words in the original viz., 'Manai' 'ore marunku' and 'Kappuru ellai', it is said, are respectively symbolic of 'the body', 'mind' and 'duty-consciousness'.

20 cf. "Vicchathinriye vilaivu seykuvaai"

- The Tiruvachakam.

6 The Lord is the Creator and also the Absorbefacient.

26 1 "What more could you do? You yourself admit that you are jostled out of your sense. Not being sane according to your own confession, your further acts will be of no avail to you." The suggestion is that the devotee is now denuded of his Pasu-botham, and is to be endowed with Pati-botham (God's own knowledge).

3 You play-act : The word in the original is 'bhavakam'. It means the devotee is a constant practitioner of meditation. Like his wife he ever contemplated the Blue Throat of the Lord.

You aren't ashamed of your sins:

cf. "Natavar pazhitthurai poonathuvaka"

- The Tiruvachakam.

37 3 The tank : It is called Vyagrapada Tirtam. It is since known as "The tank of the Nayanar-youth" (Ilamai Nayanar kulam).

42 1&2 cf. "Illangkall thorum yezhuntharuli"

- The Tiruvachakam.

8. The Puranam of Yeyar Pakai Nayanar

"I am also a serviteur of Yeyar Pakai who never said: 'No'"

- The *Tiru-th-Tonda-th-Tokai*

1. Famous it is by the abiding glory of the *Chola* kings,
   -- Ancestors of the white parasolled *Anapaya* --;
   It is *maruda* realm dight with watery fields;
   Here flows the *Cauvery* bestowing foison, and as it merges
   Into the main it purifies it making it goodly, vast and glorious;
   Fronting this is fecund *Pukar* flourishing well. (404)

2. He was the first among the merchant-clan of the city;
   He flourished well endowed with endless wealth;
   Whatever was sought by the devotees -- whoever they be --,
   Of the Lord's feet decked with the anklets of the *Vedas*,
   He would grant without ever saying 'No';
   Thus he -- *Ulaku-Yeyar-Pakaiyar* --, throve
   Poised in ready munificence in this sea-girt earth. (405)

3. Unequalled is their true service to the Lord
   Who sports on His matted hair the river *Ganga;*
   Their hearts are ever filled with the endless grace of the Lord;
   So he rendered for those devotees -- the wearers of the holy ash --,
   All types of service desired by their mind;
   He also deemed it his glory to perform all that was
   By the devotees commanded, and this, he thought
   Was the beatitude of his life, as an unswerving householder;
   Thus, even thus, he flourished. (406)

4. He is the subtle One to be meditated with Gnosis;
He is the One who dances visibly in the *Ambalam*.
Whether His disguise was known to the Goddess
Of the celestials or unknown even to Her who is
Ever inseparate from the Lord, we know not.
He took the form of a base lecherous Brahmin
Decked with the holy ash on his golden frame;
Thus he came robed in deception to His devotee
To demonstrate his *never-declining* nature. (407)

5. He came to *Pukar* serene, passed through the street
Of merchants and arrived at the house of *Yeyar-Pakaiyar*
Who came to greet Him bowing reverentially,
Impelled by great love and deeming Him to be
The servitor of the Lord-Father; Him he adored
With flowers ritualistically and said:
"Is it as a result of my great askesis of yore that I am
Blessed with the advent of a great *Muni?*" (408)

6. The deceptive Brahmin that stood fronting *Yeyar-Pakaiyar*
Who bade him a warm welcome, spake:
"I've heard it said that whatever is sought from you
By the servitors of the Lord who wears *konrai* flowers
On His matted hair, you deem it your good duty
To grant it truly, never once expressing refusal;
I come this day seeking a thing from you;
If you consent (to my request) I'll declare my intent." (409)

7. Hearkening to His words, *Yeyar-Pakaiyar* said:
"If there be aught owned by me, that truly belongs
To my Lord's servitors; it admits of no doubt.
Be pleased to grace me with your demand."
When he spake thus, pat came His reply.
"I came here to secure for me your loving wife."
Though the gracious One Spake thus, the joy
Of the pure devotee but doubled, and he
Addressed Him, bowing in reverence, thus: (410)

8. "This is indeed a boon granted to me, as what is
Sought of me is only what I already have."
He then swiftly moved in and addressed his beloved wife,
A woman par excellence in chastity
And poised in the dharmic life of a housewife, thus:
"O woman nobly descended! Oh my duly wedded wife!
This day I gift you to this true *tapaswi*."
The noble wife whose locks were decked with honied blooms
Stood dismayed; eftsoon she recovered and spake thus: (411)

9. "If this be your gracious hest to me this day
What though your command be, Oh lord of my dear life,
I should obey and perform it; option none I have."
This said she paid obeisance to her husband unique.
The devotee *Yeyar-Pakaiyar* reciprocated it;
She moved away, adored the sacred feet
Of the *tapaswi* and stood all bewildered.
Oh the woman greater than even *Lakshmi!* (412)

10. The great *tapaswi Yeyar-Pakaiyar* who gifted away his wife
Felt greatly delighted and bloomed in happiness;
Bowing he said: "Is there any thing else I can do?"
Hearing him, the true Brahmin -- the Lord --, said:
"As I have to proceed singly with this woman
You should accompany and help me
Pass this town unmolested by your loving kin." (413)

11. When thus He spake, *Yeyar-Pakaiyar* thought:
"This is a service which I myself should have done
Unprompted; now that I have made him tell me
What I should do, I am become blame-worthy."
He then moved into another apartment, decked himself
With golden vestments and tight breeches. (414)

12. Out he came armed with sword and shield
And bowed before Him; he looked a heroic lion;
He caused the *tapaswi* and the matron walk before him;
Them he followed close, ready to smite them all
Who would offer any resistance. (415)

13. The kin of the wife and also of the munificent lord,
Thus thought: "Whoever did act like this?
Yeyar-Pakai is sure demented; but does that mean
Some one else can walk away with his wife?"
To cure them of the stigma, they rose to bar their way. (416)

14. Armed with javelins, bows, swords and daggers
They rose like a hurricane and reached
The guarded outskirts of the city and stood thronging
Encircling them; loud was the din and noise.
It looked as though the sea itself rose up in arms. (417)

15. Before the Lord-Guide who fared forth casting
Looks of lust on the woman, followed by him
Who came with them to protect them on their way,
They stood thick, and said: "O evil one! Stop!
Leave her, the gentle creeper -- the paragon
Of our clan --, and go away freed of your sin." (418)

16. As the *Vedic Muni* looked at her as if scared,
She said: "O lord, fear not; *Yeyar-Pakai* 'll triumph."
Hearing this, *Yeyar Pakai*, the wearer of heroic anklet, said:
"I, your slave will fell them all to fall on earth;
Feel not depressed at all." (419)

17. He looked at the host like an angered lion
And from his looks sputtered sparks of fire;
Addressing the hostile throng of kin that thither
Gathered feeling dishonoured and stigmatized,
He said: "Flee away, every one of you, and be saved;
Otherwise you will all be cut and quartered
By my sword blazing sharp." (420)

18. "Sirrah! what have you done? How speak you like this?
The whole land will blame you; your foes 'll laugh
Derisively; but you are not a whit ashamed.
Having gifted your wife to the Brahmin, can you
This day, indulge in a panegyric of bravado?
We would rather perish, one and all
Than suffer your gift pass from you." Thus they. (421)

19. As he heard them speak thus, bitter wrath
Soared in him and he thundered thus:
"I'll cut you all and scatter the pieces everywhere;
I'll despatch your lives to the heavens and then only
Permit the *tapaswi* to proceed." Thus the good one spake. (422)

20. When he rose up to give battle, the circling kin
Did not face him but rushed to obstruct
The Brahmin -- the One that ever rides the Bull --,
Who continued His journey with the matron;
In spiralling wrath, the opposing host
Came before Him and checked His progress. (423)

21. When they thus obstructed Him, *Yeyar-Pakai* raged in anger;
With his sword -- his sole help --, he fought the battle;
He was now on the right, now on the left;
He cut off the heads, shoulders and legs of those
Who durst face him; he was like a triumphant tiger;
He distinguished himself as one unique in warfare. (424)

22. Some came in throngs; some advanced singly;
Some came from such directions as suited them;
When thus they gave him battle, the hero emerged
Before them all and proved himself
Greater than their combined force;
Quick was his leap and sudden his slaughter. (425)

23. Intestines gushed out; bodies were cut to pieces;
Heads lay broken; vultures gathered everywhere;
Eyes blazed in anger; there was none left to oppose him;
He, the warrior who wore on his crown *Siva's* feet,
Roamed victorious over the whole field. (426)

24. Blood bubbled and coursed in streams;
The field was littered with corpses; only those of the kin
Lived that fled away; all others perished;
Sole he stood on the field with his long sword. (427)

25. He that gifted away his wife to the Brahmin
And massacred all his resenting kin
Now addressed the *muni* thus: "O great one!
I'll accompany you that you may fearlessly cross
This wondrous garden." This said, he joined Him. (428)

26. The woman walked after the one unique who was
Unknown to the Two; the hero of great skill
Fared forth following her; the *muni*
Was proceeding ahead of them both.
When the *muni* came near *Saikkadu*
He turned to the valiant and said: "Now return." (429)

27. When thus the *tapaswi-muni* gave him leave,
He prostrasted at His feet and as it were
Wore them on his crown; he praised Him
Whose advent was redemptive unto the triple worlds,
And felt happy that he was blessed to receive
His grace divine; *Yeyar Pakai* then departed. (430)

28. When the goodly servitor -- the performer
Of the deed well-nigh impossible to perform --,
Departed, the Lord, blue-throated and eight-shouldered,
-- The Brahmin true --, eyed him in delight;
Thus He thought: "Lo, his heart knows no falsity;
He goes away without even casting a look behind."
He started recalling him whose heart was truth's abode. (431)

29. "O *Yeyar Pakai Muni*, save me! Come back to save me!
O the unforgetting one, save me! Dear one, save me!
O hero that performed the rarest deed, save me!
Thus cried He whom the *Vedas* that cure befuddlement,
And *Vishnu* and *Brahma* searched in vain. (432)

30. As he heard the summoning voice, he answered aloud:
"I have come, I have come, your servitor;
If there be any still to oppose you, my strong hand
Will wield the mighty sword whose prey they are."
Thus he cried and came running thither;
The Lord, the wearer of ear-ring, by then vanished
To reappear before him in His form of Grace. (433)

31. *Yeyar Pakai* saw not the *muni*, he but saw the woman;
He beheld his Lord and His Consort mounted on the Bull
And it looked as though an auric hill stood beauteous
On an argentine hill; he no longer stood on the ground;
He fell on earth and prostrated; he rose up to hail Him. (434)

32. "I know not how to articulate, praise be!
O the form that for me manifested, praise be!
You hastened to grace me and made me
Your sempiternal servitor, praise be!
O grantor of endless bliss to me, praise be!
O the feet that dance in *Tillai Ambalam*, praise be!" (435)

33. When thus he hailed Him that was enthroned
On the white Bull poised in the skyey expanse,
Spake the Lord thus: "We feel happy, having witnessed
On earth your act of devoted love for Us; O flawless one!
Come and abide with Us with your fair wife." (436)

34. Unto the divine devotee stablished in grace
And his divinely chaste wife poised in clarity,
The Lord granted fittingly bliss eternal,
And caused the celestials hail them;
Then the Lord -- the Rider of the Bull --,
Took to His form invisible in the Ether of Gnosis. (437)

35. The celestials showered flowers, the *Vedas* great resounded;
Munis of great wisdom sang their praise;
Thus were the flawless devotees with beatitude blessed
To dwell and adore the Lord in the ever-blessed *Siva-Loka;*
The kin that perished in the skirmish gained *Valhalla.* (438)

36. Having humbly hailed the glory of the servitor
Who gifted his sweet spouse willingly
To one who was a devotee of the Lord
I now proceed to hail the glory of *Ilasai Maran*
A loving servitor of the Lord's devotees. (439)

Stanza	Line		
1		Maruda	: The region of arable tracts.
2	6	Ulaku-Yeyar-Pakaiyar	: This name suggests that he was hostile to the nature of the world (i.e.) to the worldly. We must in this context think of the name Maran by which Nammazhwar was known in his childhood. Maran means, one who is contrary to the nature of the world(ly).

4 The acts of the Lord appear to be inconsistent. He who is invisible (without form) dances in Tillai visibly (with form). He who has no form whatever assumes a disguise. He comes as a libidinous debauchee. But His body is bright with the pure stripes of the holy ash. Now the question is this. Is His coming known to His Consort? If it is known to her, She will not suffer Him to seek the wife of some one else. If it is said that it is unknown to Her, that will be impossible, for She shares for ever His very frame. Therefore it is, our saint says: "We do not know."

26	2	the Two	: Brahma and Vishnu.
29	2	The unfor-getting one	: One who never forgets the Lord.

30 6-7 The Lord who came to put his devotee to test, in the guise of a Brahmin, cast away His disguise. To the true devotee the Lord now reveals His true form.

33 The great commentator Siva-k-Kavi says that the wife had come to abide with Him already. The husband was only bidden to join her.

9. The Puranam of Ilayankudi Mara Nayanar

"I am a servitor to the servitors of Ilayankudi Maran."

- The *Tiru-th-Tonda-th-Tokai*

1. He for ever wears on his crown the feet of the Dancer
Who dances in the *Ambalam* roofed of gold;
He is stablished in the lofty excellence
Of servitude to the Lord-God;
As a result of the askesis of the ancient clan of *Sudras*
He came to be born to illumine this world;
He is *Maranar* of *Ilayankudi*. (440)

2. He desired the flourishing on earth
Of the limitless wealth
Derived from husbandry
And the mind made
Abidingly rich
By the glorious service rendered
To the servants of the Lord
That sports on His crest the *Ganga*,
And from these, secure for him enduring gain. (441)

3. Whenever devotees visited him -- whoever they be --,
He would, rooted in devotion, humbly receive them
And would address them kindly with loving words;
The sole reason which impelled him to revere them was,
That they were the servitors of the Lord who wears
Bones as ornaments and skulls as garland. (442)

4. He would receive them into his house and wash
Their feet in ritual love;
He would have them duly seated, and adore them;
Then to please those devotees of the Lord of gods
He would treat them to fourfold victuals
Rich in sextuple taste. (443)

5. As a result of the participation of the devotees
Of Siva -- the Lord of all entia --, in the virtuous feasting
Offered by him daily to their great delight,
His wealth, immovable and movable, extended
And increased, and he was like the Lord of *Alakapuri*,
The companion of the eight-shouldered Lord. (444)

6. To reveal to the world that he would behave thus
Not only during his days of plenty but also
During times when he is steeped in miserable penury
The Lord-God of *Tillai* thought fit to cause
The daily diminution of his wealth
Resulting in abject poverty. (445)

7. His wealth wilted; but the mind of our deity
-- *Maran*, the Lord of *Ilayankudi* --, did not wilt;
By barter, pledge and mortgage he came by
The wherewithal to do as before his service divine
To the devotees, in which he grew mellow. (446)

8. While thus flourished his service, the Lord
Unknown to *Vishnu* -- the triumphant Boar,
And *Brahma* -- the Swan, stepped down on earth
To bless it, in the guise of a great *tapaswi*
Unaccompanied by His Consort, and His mount, the Bull. (447)

9. On a night when it rained *Maranar* remained
Behind latched doors wallowing in soaring hunger
With nothing to relieve him.
It was thus, even thus, he welcomed his guest. (448)

10. He dried His dripping person and then
Offered to Him duly a seat;
He desired to feed his guest;
He addressed his wife thus: "Great is the hunger
Of this *tapaswi*; what shall we do?" (449)

11. "Even though we have no food for ourselves
We must yet fittingly feed him who is a devotee
Of the Lord whose Consort is the daughter of Himavant.
In what way do we, this achieve?" Thus he. (450)

12. His wife replied him thus: "I see no other way.
There are none to give us aught;
It's late in the night; there's no other place to go;
What is there for this sinner to do?" Thus she. (451)

13. And she added: "If you can gather back the seeds
Of paddy that this day were sown in the fields,
It'll be possible for me to provide food;
We can thus rid our misery; I see no other way." (452)

14. When he heard these words of his wife, he felt delighted
As if he got back all his former wealth;
He willingly agreed to the course suggested
And prepared himself to visit the watery fields. (453)

15. The rain it rained fierce and violent;
It was blindening to boot hiding all the sides;
It looked as though the dark inky midnight
Dissolving in black torrents poured on earth. (454)

16. Men would shudder even to think of it;
Such was it, the dead of night,
Verily a sheet of inky wash
Well-nigh impossible to brave. (455)

17. Enthused by impelling love, with a big basket
Held inverted on his head, through *via trita*,
Fared forth *Ilayankudi Maranar*, the princely patron,
To the fields where slumbered water-fowls. (456)

18. He went his way feeling the ground with his feet;
With his hands he gathered the germinating seeds
Which lay floating, into his basket, and filled it,
And hastened home with the basket on his head. (457)

19. His wife that awaited him at the threshold
Received it, and in love washed the mire away
From the seeds; then she spake to him thus:
"To cook the grain there's fuel none for the oven."
Then the great one pulled down the rafters of his roof
That covered the house. O the house eternal! (458)

20. With splintered rafter as fuel, she lit the oven
And fried the moist germinating grain into rice
Which she poured into a vessel and cooked.
This done the paragon of excelling chastity
Humbly addressed her husband thus:
"What shall we do for curry?" (459)

21. He thought: "The great devotee must have suffered much
By reason of his fatiguing journey and cruel hunger."
Driven by love, he hastened to the backyard
And plied his feeling hands and gathered the greens
Which have grown a little in the small germinating pits;
It looked as though he plucked out *Pasam* by its root. (460)

22. The wife received the greens from the husband,
Sifted them clean and washed them well;
She put them in spotless vessels and with wonted skill
Prepared many a dish; old memories assailed her;
She consoled herself with the thought
That she could do that much at least. (461)

23. She then addressed her husband and showed him
The dishes of curry and said: "Let us at once
Serve the peerless one with food." He neared Him
Who is not to be comprehended by any one,
And gently woke Him up from His slumber. (462)

24. He beseeched Him thus: "O great one that hath
Deigned to redeem humble me sunk in misery!
Be pleased to partake of the repast."
When the servitor spake thus, He rose up
And blazed as pure flame; the devotee
And his divine wife stood wonder-struck. (463)

25. Before the devotees who stood transfixed in awe
When the Lord unknown to *Vishnu* and *Brahma*
Blazed forth as flame, *Sankara* with His Consort
Of perfumed locks rejoicingly manifested
On His mount, the Bull; addressing the great devotee
Who performed the *Maheswara Pooja*, He said: (464)

26. "Dear one, you have (all through your life)
Performed *Maheswara Pooja*; with your wife
Abide in My world; with *Kubhera* himself
To carry out your mandates with all his wealth
At your disposal, be in bliss immersed."
The One far far superior to all, blessed him thus. (465)

27. Rewarding him fittingly and conferring on him bliss,
The One that burnt the triple cities, grew invisible;
Wearing the feet of that great servitor on my crown
I now proceed to narrate the annals
Of Mei-p-Porul, the King of Sethi realm. (466)

Stanza	Line		
4	5	Fourfold victuals	: Food to be eaten (devoured) masticated, licked and drunk.
	6	Sextuple taste	: Bitter, sweet, sour, hot, salty and astringent.
25		Sankara	: He who does good; a name of Siva. Maheswara Pooja: The ritual worship offered to the servitors of the Lord; feeding forms part of it.

10. The Puranam of Mei-p-Porul Nayanar

"I am a servitor to Mei-p-Porul, puissant and victorious"

- The *Tiru-th-Tonda-th-Tokai*

1. His capital was *Tiru-k-Kovalur* in goodly *Sethi* realm;
He hailed from *Malayaman* dynasty which served
Ammai-Appar from generation to generation;
He, the Prince was poised in the noble way true, of the *Vedas*
And served the Lord's servitors divining their true wish. (467)

2. He adhered flawlessly to the righteous way of monarchic code;
He quelled his foes by the valour of his shoulders strong;
He swerved not from the plighted word and ruled gloriously;
He for ever contemplated the habit of devotees
Of the Lord whose matted hair sports the billowy flood. (468)

3. In all the temples of *Ammai-Appar*, *poojas* were
Gloriously and unfailingly performed;
In temples flourished music sevenfold and dance;
Thus ruled the adorable prince adoring,
Whose sole sustaining force was the feet of the Lord's servitors. (469)

4. All the riches and wealth he came by as a prince
Were ear-marked for the devotees of the Lord
Who dances in *Tillai Ambalam;*
When devotees sought him to supply their wants
He gave them aplenty and in soaring joy. (470)

5. Whilst thus he flourished, a hostile king
Fired by a desire to vanquish him,
Waged wars against him many a time, only to lose
His elephantry and cavalry and infantry.
Thus repeatedly defeated he was sunk in shame. (471)

6. The worsted king who could not think of victory
In the field of battle, coming to know
Of the religious piety of *Mei-p-Porul*, desired
To ape his great habit of wearing the holy ash
And thus win by deception; his mind
Nurtured such unspeakable evil, and he
Prepared for his infiltration into *Tiru-k-Kovalur*. (472)

7. He smeared all over his person the holy ash;
He had his hair matted and tied it into a crown;
He held a *mega biblion* which concealed a dagger;
Like a lamp thick with black at the wick, his mind
Harboured deception; thus in his false habit of *tapas*
Mutthanathan barged in. (473)

8. In the mansions of the long and dazzling streets
Danced damsels, liana-like, whose coiffures
Were with flowers wreathed; over the mansions
From their flag-poles wafted white flags bright;
The cruel-hearted one in the disguise of a great tapaswi
Passed through these and arrived at
The beauteous palace of the King of *Sethi* realm. (474)

9. The guards of the palace adored him with folded hands,
And said: "The Lord Himself is come! Be pleased to step in!"
He crossed many a threshold and arrived at the last one;
Thither stood *Thatthan* who beseeched him thus:
"Be pleased to regard the hour; the King slumbers." (475)

10. When he spake thus, he countered him thus:
"I am to initiate him in the way of salvation;
You be here." He passed beyond him into the chamber
Where the king was sleeping on a cot wrought of gold;
He also beheld seated by his side his queen,
The one of soft mien and perfumed locks. (476)

11. When he neared him, the queen swiftly descended
From the cot and woke up the garlanded king;
The king rose up, and folding his hands over his head
Said: "To the servitor of the God of gods, praise be!"
And he stood bowing before him as was his wont. (477)

12. "For my life to thrive auspiciously and be crowned
With its fruit, I am blessed with your visit!
To what good luck do I owe this?" Thus spake the King.
"I have come here to instruct you in the *Agama*
Authored of yore by your God and not to be seen
In *orbis terrarum*." Thus he replied. (478)

13. "Can there be a beatitude greater than this?
Be pleased to bless me by reading out
The peerless Agama of the Lord." Thus spake the king.
"Your queen decked with fragrant garlands
Must first part from you, and then, you and I
Must seek a different spot lonely." Thus he. (479)

14. He commanded in love his consort, *Lakshmi*-like,
To hasten to the gynaeceum, and then had him,
-- The one robed in the weeds of a *tapaswi* --,
Installed on a seat, while he himself sat on the ground.
Then he said: "Be pleased to grace me." (480)

15. He placed on his lap the treacherous scroll
And pretended to unwind the rope binding it.
When the king bowed low reverentially, he drew out
The dagger and did what he intended to do;
The king exclaimed, still adoring:
"The true habit of askesis is indeed the truth supreme."
(Surely it is) the king (who) triumphed! (481)

16. *Thatthan* who kept surveillance over him,
Even when he who concealing himself in the garb
Of a tapaswi broke into the king's chamber,
Now darted into the room, and was about to smite him
With his sword; the king who was to fall down
As blood profusely gushed forth from him,
Stretched out his long arm, prevented his deed
And exclaimed: "*Thattha*, he is our own." Then he fell down. (482)

17. *Thatthan* the servitor who was thus restrained
By the prince who suffered pain and fell down,
Bowed low, and said: "What should I do?"
The prince replied him thus: "Let none obstruct
The devotee of our Lord on his way back.
You go with him and see to his safe passage." (483)

18. All those that came to know of the happening
Hemmed them on all sides and said:
"We'll kill him, the false saint who had harmed the king."
Thatthan prevented them from harming him, took him with him
And said: "He is permitted to go by the king's command." (484)

19. When they heard this they moved away by reason
Of the dread command; *Thatthan* took him
Through the royal highway and crossed the city;
With the sword drawn protectively, he reached
The forest by men unfrequented, and left him there,
And then returned. (485)

20. With effort great, the prince still bore his ebbing life
Only to hear the news that the one of deceptious habit
Had been conveyed safe, unmolested by opposing hordes;
Before him came he who carried out the royal mandate. (486)

21. He hailed his feet and said: "I had safely escorted
Him who by his make-believe habit had won."
Hearing this the prince said: "Who can ever do
Like unto what you -- the great one --, had this day
For me done." His eyes rained on the one that stood there
Immense loving-kindness soulful. (487)

22. He addressed his parting words of message
To the ministers, to the loving and languishing wife
And to the kin, and said: "Honour the rule which bids you
Foster love for the holy ash." This said,
He meditated on the flower-feet of the Lord
That dance in the *Ambalam*. (488)

23. To the devotee-prince, the Lord of Himavant's daughter
Granted darshan in the form in which
He contemplated Him for many a day.
The Lord graced him to attain the shade
Of His ankleted feet inaccessible to the celestials,
And also blessed him with the beatitude
To adore Him for ever. (489)

24. Even when his dear life was done away with,
Deeming him a devotee of the Lord-God
The prince of *Sethi* realm fostered the great way.
I hail his glory in my humble way;
With the golden feet of contentious *Viran Mindar*
Set on my crown I now proceed to narrate his divine service. (490)

Stanza	Line		
2	4	Habit	: The Tamil word is Vetam. This is translated as 'habit' by Gordon Matthews. Habit means 'outward appearance'. Vide Chambers's Dictionary. Habit here means guise.
5		St. Sekkizhar describes the elephants as decked with golden covers.	
7		The adage which says: "Mega biblion, mega kakon" (Big book, great evil) literally applies here.	
9		The word 'thatai' means 'a threshold'. It also means: 'Obstruction'. Every threshold in a palace will be guarded. The last of these thresholds is the one leading to the King's bed-chamber. This will be guarded by the most trusted of the king's bodyguards.	

12 This stanza is a marvel of double entendre. Every line is charged with a double significance. Auspicious paths may flourish. However as Thomas Gray says: "The paths of glory lead but to the grave."

The phrase "Vazhvu vantu anainthatu" means: "Life is being fulfilled." It also means: "Life is getting extinct." Mutthanathan says that he has come with an opus of God. But he also says that it is by "Your God." A devotee will always say: "Our God."

He further says that the work is not to be seen in orbis terrarum (the whole world). Indeed a book concealing a dagger is not at all an ordinary sight.

cf. "In hands that worship weapon often hidden lies
Such are the tears that fall from foeman's eyes."

– *Kural*, 828.

13 2-3 It is the Agama which truly confers liberation on a soul. The king is to gain liberation eftsoon.

4-5 "Your queen ... part from you" : This is indeed a dramatic irony.

	5-6	different spot	: After the event the king is to be received into the Abode of bliss and the pseudo-saint into bottomless perdition.
15	1-2	In olden days the writing was done with a stylus on palm leaves and these were tied together with strings. Again to keep the leaves in position, they were secured by a fairly long thread. One should unwind the thread to enable onself to read the book.	
21	2	Won	: This refers to the fancied achievement of Mutthanathan.

11. The Puranam of Viran Mindar

"I am a serviteur of Viran Mindar
Of Kunroor girt with spreading gardens."

- The *Tiru-th-Tonda-th-Tokai*

1. It is a country gained by *Parasi Rama*,
The *tapaswi* great who hailed the ankleted feet
Of the Lord, the wearer of *konrai* chaplets fragrant
On His matted hair, and gained for a boon the battle-axe.
It is *Malai Nadu* rich with the wealth
Of the billowy sea, arable lands and mountains. (491)

2. Bright pearls of sea, pearls from sugarcanes
That grow in the fields, cool pearls of bamboos,
And lustrous pearls that fall from the tusks of tuskers:
These were cunningly threaded into garlands
By damsels whose white teeth were rows of pearls.
With these throve *Sengkunroor*, the first
Amongst the divine cities of Kerala. (492)

3. The glory of this city pervades the whole world;
With the wealth yielded by fields where teem swans,
The Brahmins throve thither poised in the way of the *Vedas*,
Pure and unsullied as leaders; this city indeed is
The dwelling place of such great families. (493)

4. From this city, to illumine the clan of *Velalas*
Hailed he, who clung to the ineffably glorious feet
Of Lord *Siva*, and scorned away all other desires;
He, our deity *Viran Mindar* was devoted to
The true servitors, whose greatness is bourneless. (494)

5. Impelled by a spiralling love to adore the shrines
Where the Lord who sports on His matted hair
The crescent and the *Ganga*, willingly abides,
He took to pilgrimage; he would, wherever he went,
First hail the holy company ripe in devotion rich
And then only the Lord Himself; this was
The beatitude which he was blessed with. (495)

6. He passed *Malai Nadu* of golden cascades
And went through *orbis terrarum*, pursuing
And strengthening the path of devotion firm;
He, the peerless one eventually arrived at *Tiruvaroor*
Where the Lord who bent the firm-based Mt.*Meru* into a bow
And smote the triple cities, is enthroned on the Car
Whose steeds are the four *Vedas*, and hailed Him. (496)

7. He declared *Van-tondar* to be *anathema*
As he coursed into the temple without first
Hailing the holy devotees of *Siva* who lustrously thronged
In the *Devasiriyan*, rich in grace divine.
It was thus he was by *Siva* blessed;
Eke was he to be blessed by Him still further. (497)

8. "*Arooran* who went straight without hailing
The holy devotees of *Siva* who bent
The sky-high *Meru* into a bow,
And also his ruling Lord who wears the crescent
On His crest and snakes as His jewels,
Are both taboo for us." Thus he declared.
Yet it is even from them he received grace pure.
Who can ever like unto him hail devotees thus?. (498)

9. For the world to thrive, for our own flourishing
And for the prospering of the goodly ways of Saivism
Aroorar composed and hymned (before *Devasiriyan)*
The *Tiru-th-Tonda-th-Tokai*; the Lord who was not to be
Comprehended by the *Vedas* rich in *chhandas*
Declared: "We abide where devotees are."
Who can hymn the glory of the Lord who devoured
Poison which into nectar He transformed? (499)

10. *Viran Mindar* who for many many days
Served on earth the cause of Saivism, sublime and lofty,
By the grace of our Lord, fittingly reached the shade
Of His feet and for ever thrives as a *Gana-Natha*. (500)

11. Why expatiate further? The world is enlightened by
The Tiru-th-Tonda-th-Tokai and it is to *Viran Mindar* we owe it.
Is it given to me to hail him in full?
We wear on our crown his feet and proceed to
Narrate the service of the merchant *Amar-Niti of Arai.* (501)

Stanza	Line		
1	1	Parasi Rama	: He was the son of Jamadagni who was murdered by the Kshatriya Karthaveeryarjuna, the thousand-armed. To avenge the death of his father, he performed extra-ordinary askesis with which Siva was pleased. The Lord gave him for a boon, Parasu, a battle-axe. Thereafter he came to be known as Parasu Rama. In his violent dislike for kshatriyas he did away with, not only Karthaveeryarjuna, but many others too. To rid himself of the sin of regicide, he desired to gift a whole country to pious Brahmins. He threw into the southern sea his battle-axe and implored Varuna (Sea) to recede. The sea receded and land appeared. This land is known as Parasu-Rama-Kshetra. This is called Malai Nadu as it is dight with multitudinous ranges of hills. This realm goes by the name Kerala, in modern times.
2		Cunningly	: Skillfully.

12. The Puranam Of Amar-Niti Nayanar

"I am a servitor to Amar-Niti whose garland
Is wrought of soft-petalled jasmine"

- The *Tiru-th-Tonda-th-Tokai*

1. It is in the *Cauvery* delta of the *Cholas* of great renown;
It is dight with flowery gardens which reach the clouds,
And are buzzed over by joyous bees; through its streets
Pass chariots; it is a famous and great city on earth;
It is *Pazhayarai*. (502)

2. He hailed from the merchant-clan of that city;
With gold, pearls and goodly gems, and varieties
Of silk-products pouring in from all the realms,
He was richly endowed and throve a merchant great;
Amar-Niti was he called. (503)

3. He would think on nought but the feet of *Siva;*
He would feast the devotees of *Siva* whose hue
Is that of the incarnadine sky crepuscular;
Divining the wish of devotees he would
Give them gratis *kantai, keell* and *kovanam.*
Thus did he the fruit of his foison, gain. (504)

4. In *Tirunalloor* of the First One, the triple-eyed *Digambara,*
He attended the divinely glorious festival of the Lord,
And founded a beauteous *matam* for feeding devotees;
Then (after a time) he, the pure one, arrived at
Tirunalloor with his kith and kin. (505)

5. Adoring in linked love the Lord and eyeing in devotion
The divine and beauteous festival of the Blue-throated,
And hailing His grace which enabled him to feast
In the beauteous *matam* His devotees in increasing joy
With a melting heart, he spent his days thither. (506)

6. One day the blue-throated Lord of *Tirunalloor* vast,
Who is the great One that bears on His matted hair
The crescent -- verily a tender shoot --, desiring to
Demonstrate the glory of His *Kovanam*, and thereby
Bless His devotee with enduring grace, assumed
The form of a *Brahmin-Brahmachari*. (507)

7. His beauteous tuft concealed His red matted hair;
Triple stripes of the Holy Ash -- the insignia of Saivism,
Blazed from His forehead; the holy thread to which
Was tied a piece of deer-skin, his body bore;
He wore on a finger a *pavitra* of emeraldine *darbha*. (508)

8. On His waist was a string of *munji* from which
Was suspended His *Kovanam* wrought of the *Vedas*
Which for ever seek Him, their palladium.
He walked on earth with His flowery feet
Which are ever enshrined in the bosoms
Of His devotees who have quelled the murk of deception. (509)

9. Beholders melted in love that welled up in them;
His advent was to reveal the pure way which is
Poised in the devotee's love; on His staff were fastened
A pair of *kovanams*, a pouch of the Holy Ash and *darbha*.
Thus He came to the *matam* of *Amar-Nitiyar*. (510)

10. When he beheld Him, his face bloomed brighter
Than even his mind; he rushed to Him and bowed.
"I had not been blessed with your visit so far;
How great should have been my *tapas* of yore
To receive you in this *matam*." Thus spake *Amar-Nitiyar*. (511)

11. Addressing the bowing devotee, He who had concealed
His eye in the forehead, said: "I have heard of
Your feeding the devotees who thrive in increasing love,
And also of your gifts to them such as *kantais*,
Keells, garments and kovanams white.
Therefore did I come to call on you." (512)

12. When he heard the Lord speak thus, he beseeched Him thus:
"In this beauteous *matam*, for feeding Brahmins
Well-versed in the *Vedas* four, holy Brahmins pure
Do the cooking; may you be pleased to dine here." (513)

13. The Brahmin-lad consenting to what the devotee
Entreated of Him bowing, said: "I'll bathe
In the divine river *Cauvery* and return;
In case it rains, keep this (dried) *kovanam* with you
And return it to me." This said, He untied
From His staff a white and bright *kovanam*. (514)

14. "I need not expatiate to you on the lofty excellence
Of this *kovanam;* receive it and keep it safe
With you till I return here; be not negligent;
Preserve it yonder and give it back to me."
Thus He spake and handed it over to him. (515)

15. The flawless devotee received the *kovanam*
And said: "Be pleased to return soon after the bath."
The Brahmin who had concealed His matted hair
And the flood of *Ganga* too, left the place to bathe
In the billowy water pure of the *Cauvery*, nearby. (516)

16. The peerless servitor who received the *kovanam*
Bearing in mind the Brahmin's instructions,
Did not keep it with his gift-articles
-- *Kantais, keells,* garments and *kovanams* --.
He thought of a safe place and thither kept it safe. (517)

17. The Brahmin who left the *matam* caused
The disappearance of the entrusted *kovanam*.
We know not if He bathed in a ford of the *Cauvery*
Where nelumboes burgeon in abundance,
Or bathed Himself with the water of the *Ganga*
That is borne by His matted hair, pure and fragrant.
He did return wet and dripping in the rain. (518)

18. When He, the wearer of the lustrous crescent of a chaplet,
Returned, the devotee rich in mellowed love
Had already caused the preparation of a feast
Sumptuous with sextuple taste; he came before Him
And stood bowing. (519)

19. The Lord desiring to bathe in the pure flood
Of the devotee's love, addressed him thus:
"Our *kovanam* is wet from the bath in the cool flood;
The one on the staff is also wet; I must have
A change of dress; give to me the *kovanam*
I gave thee." Thus spake the *Kovanam*-Filcher. (520)

20. On account of his ignorance of the deception
Played by the Great One, the devotee hastened inside;
When he looked for it in the guarded place
The flawless one could not find it there.
"What did the *kovanam* do?" he thought;
Utterly bewildered, he searched for it. (521)

21. "The dazzling *kovanam* white has grown wings
And has, sure, escaped from me." He thought thus.
He searched for it amidst all his merchandise
But in vain; what could he do? He stood dazed.
Lo, he was caught in the great gin of the gracious One. (522)

22. With his wife and circling kin, he grieved,
That it had happened even thus; he could think of
Nothing else; he grieved sore; he could not stand
There either; for His use he took with him
Another *kovanam* and came out. (523)

23. He came before Him, the Father, and said: "O great one!
I canst not find the *kovanam* you gave me
In the place where I kept it safe; none there is
Who could have concealed it in a different place.
I do not know how it disappeared; a marvel
Like unto this I have never witnessed. (524)

24. I have in love secured for your use
A different but an exceedingly good *kovanam;*
It is not a *kovanam* torn from a bigger cloth;
It was woven as such. O great one in whose
Forehead dazzle stripes of the Holy Ash,
Be pleased to wear it removing your wet one.
Be pleased to forgive me." Thus he spake, and bowed. (525)

25. The Brahmin grew wroth and said:
"Nobly-spoken, oh *Amar-Niti!* Not much time
Had passed; the *kovanam* that I gave you this day
You have appropriated; is it becoming of you
To tell me to accept a substitute?" (526)

26. Was it to filch my *kovanam* without any qualms
Of conscience that you made the world believe
In your gifts of *kovanam* all these days?
Beauteous is your way of business and swift too!"
Thus raged the Infinite One from whose eyes
Sparks of fire sputtered. (527)

27. When the Brhamin who had concealed the fawn
On His hand and held a staff in its place
Raged thus, with his senses undone and face wilting
He said: "Be pleased to forgive the great sin of this
Little one; I have no knowledge of the happening."
Then he fell at His feet and grieved sore. (528)

28. "Bid me do that which you deem fit;
Demand not the *kovanam*, but be pleased
To accept in millions delectable silken garments
And gems -- all of the first order." Thus he.
He was gripped by fear which shook him to the roots
And which his body could not contain.
He fell on earth and prostrated before Him
Times without number. (529)

29. Addressing the devotee who thus paid obeisance,
He who is the Supreme Ens, as if mollified, said:
"Of what avail are your gems, gold, goodly garments
And the like to me? It'll suffice if you give
A kovanam equivalent to Mine." (530)

30. Hearing this, the mind of him who is a lion
Among merchants, burgeoned in joy; he said:
"In lieu of your bright and white *kovanam*
When I offered to you silken garments, you would not
Them accept; so how am I to requite you
With a *kovanam* matching the greatness of yours?" (531)

31. Then the Lord spake thus: "Apart from the *kovanam*
We now wear, the one we gave you and which
You allege as lost can be matched by this only."
He untied the *kovanam* from his staff and said:
"Give me a *kovanam* equivalent to its weight." (532)

32. "Very well," said the devotee and brought forth a scale;
On one of its pans, the Lord who bent the mountain
Into a bow, placed His *Kovanam;* the devotee
That stood there put his woven kovanam into the other;
Lo, it didn't equal the weight of His. (533)

33. *Kovanams*, long and innumerable, which he had kept stored
To be gifted with love for *Nayanmar*, he put,
One by one, into the pan, hoping to match the weight of His;
But his pan rose up; the servitor of the Dancing Feet
Stood wonder-struck. (534)

34. "This is a gramarye not to be witnessed in this world!
Innumerable *kovanams* do not equal this one in weight."
Thus wondering, he put into his pan soft garments, ciclatons
And silken clothings; even then the pan stood aloft;
Then he added thereunto bales of soft varieties. (535)

35. Than the pan into which the devotee of boundless love
Poured his love, the pan of the First One,
In unison with the adage which says:
'Grace remains low in the presence of devotional love',
Stood lower; even when clothings of silk and cotton
Were added endlessly the devotee's pan stood
Higher than the pan of the sole *Kovanam*. (536)

36. Beholding this, fear-stricken, the devotee spake
To the Brahmin thus: "Even when filled with
Boundless clothing, pure and good, and also varieties
Of innumerable threads, the pan stands thus;
Suffer me to freight it with my other wealth."
Thus did he, Him beseech. (537)

37. To this the Brahmin, the Lord that shares in His frame
His Consort, consenting said: "What else have We to say?
Put all your multifoliate wealth; the pans must
Somehow stand even; it is that only We demand." (538)

38. He came with silver and gold, good and aplenty
And also heaps of ninefold gems; with metals of many kinds
And alloys too he came, and these he unloaded into his pan
Which still stood high; beholders marvelled at it. (539)

39. Its threads are the import of the *Vedas* four
Brimming with the puissance of askesis;
It is dear to Siva, the *kovanam*. So the encomium
-- That all the wealth of *Amar-Nitiyar* in this world
And all the wealth of all the worlds cannot
Match it --, mirrors not its true glory. (540)

40. Having witnessed the happening, the peerless one
Standing before Him spake thus: "I have loaded
The pan with all my blemishless wealth; nothing now remains;
O Lord, may I be graced with leave to ascend
The pan with my wife and little child, if considered fit. (541)

41. When thus, in fear, the devotee of flawless servitude
Spake before Him, the Lord of gracious eyes sized up
The situation even thus; the scale was but an excuse
To free them from their bondage; He gave them
Leave to ascend the pan and gain ascension. (542)

42. He rejoiced in his mind; he adored His flower-feet
With his crown; he held his child and his wife
Whose locks were plaited with fragrant flowers;
He circumambulated the scale unique
To ascend the pan; thus resolved he spake: (543)

43. "May the pans of the scale stand even, if it be true
That we haven't swerved from the truthful servitude
-- Ever-poised in love and devotion --,
To the Holy Ash of the Lord!"
He adored the Lord of Tirunalloor, dight with
Rain-filled tanks and gardens galore.
He chaunted the Panchakshara and the pan ascended. (544)

44. In spiralling love, when they ascended the pan,
As the *kovanam* worn on the waist of the God of gods
And the servitude of them -- the Lord's devotees
Whose love for Him knows no diminution, were equal,
The pans weighed equal, and level stood the beam. (545)

45. Men on earth hailed the devotee of clarified intellect;
Struck with wonderment which swept everywhere
They adored him; the celestials rained in joy
Karpaka flowers which mantled the bright sky. (546)

46. As the celestials rained flowers, the Brhamin
That blazed with the triple stripes of the Holy Ash
Vanished somehow into the heavens.
Resuming His usual form which has beginning none,
The Deity of *Tirunalloor* -- first among cities --,
Manifested Himself as *Ammai-Appar*. (547)

47. Unto the devotee who stood in the pan
Hymning and hailing Him, his son and wife,
He granted grace, abiding and ever-sweet;
He blessed them with ethereal beatitude eternal,
To adore Him for ever; this done
The great One His presence withdrew. (548)

48. By the grace of Grace, the great scale itself
Turned into a car and flew up.
The flawless devotee and his family
Were translated to *Siva-Loka* to be with the Primal God
Who blessed them with bliss unending. (549)

In praise of St. Sundarar

49. The munificent Lord who is unknown to
Brahma throned on lotus, and *Vishnu*,
Claimed him for the redemption of the world
At *Vennainalloor* hailed by many, by means
Of an ancient document; I invoke his feet
And wear them on my crown;
My servitude to his feet is my suzerainty. (550)

Stanza	Line		
3		Kantai	: Four or five pieces of cloth sewn together to serve as sheet or blanket.
		Keell	: The girdle of an ascetic or a mendicant, being generally a long slip of cloth.
		Kovanam	: The loin-cloth.
4	1	The Lord is the First Cause, uncaused by any other cause. He is also a Digambara. His three eyes are symbolic of His form of light. His digambara-form is that of naked majesty and is symbolic of the truth that HE ALONE IS. "Digambara: The naked ascetic". -Little Oxford Dictionary.	
6		Brahmmachari	: An unmarried student of the Vedas.
7		Pavitra	: A ring.
		Emeraldine	: Adjective of emerald; green.
8		Munji	: One of seven types of darbha grass.
35	2	Murk of deception	: Anava mala.
		Poured his love	: Poured his goods in love.

13. The Puranam of Eri-Pattha Nayanar

"I am a servitor of Eri-Patthar,
the wielder of mazhu, shaped like a leaf."

- The *Tiru-th-Tonda-th-Tokai*

1. In orbis terrarum, if any trouble were to beset
The devotees of the Lord who rides a young Bull,
He would hasten quick to their relief;
Endless is the fame of *Eri-Patthar;*
Though it is beyond me to narrate his glory,
I attempt it yet, impelled by sheer love. (551)

2. From the time of *(Karikala) Chola* who inscribed
His triumphant signum of tiger on the crest
Of Himavant, and who total blocked all the old passes,
Opening a new one which alone since serves
As a guarded pass, to the days of glorious *Anapayan,*
Thrives hoary ***Karur*** with beauteous streets bright
As a city where the *Chola* Kings were coronated. (552)

3. With its fortressed walls cloud-capped,
Rows of mansions piercing the sky,
Pure-rayed gems paved on thresholds,
Gardens galore where fragrance wafts
And streets bright with moon-bright damsels
Sought by bees for their flowered coiffures
Karur is rich and doth excel the city of Indra. (553)

4. In the fords gambol ichorous tuskers; in gardens
That lie beyond the city, dance in joy the peacocks;
In theatres with gems inlaid, danseuses dance,
And bees and beetles sport in their locks;
In the streets of spreading light,
Creepers play with the rays of lustre.
Thus is *Karur* unique, endowed with foison
Hailed on earth vast and great. (554)

5. In that great city of abiding wealth
The fortressed walls are wrought of gold
At which the celestials do marvel;
The Lord is enshrined firm in the minds
Of devotees true, poised in loving and ever-crescent service;
Even so, here too in "Anilai" the Lord's temple,
Siva abides for ever. (555)

6. The Holy One who is even beyond the *Vedas*
-- Full of rich meaning though --,
Was by him at this temple adored that he might
End the deluding cycle of birth and death.
Great was his servitude, poised in God's own grace,
To the servitors of the Lord whose throat
Holds the dark venom; he was called *Eri-Patthar.* (556)

7. For the thriving of the abiding Saivism in this world
Which thrives on rainwater, when devotees
Of the Lord whose hair blazes like fire,
Were beset with troubles, he would dart like a lion
From its den, and quell the hostile force;
For this he wielded a battle-axe hailed by the *Vedas.* (557)

8. While he thus flourished, a holy saint named
Sivakami Andar served the Lord of *Anilai*
With intense love; he would gather flowers,
Weave them into garlands, and adore the Lord
With a mind brimming with devotion. (558)

9. One day, when day broke, he woke up as usual
And bathed in cool water; he tied his mouth
With a piece of cloth, went into the fragrant garden
Rich with bunches of flowers and gathered
With his experienced hand such good flowers
As were about to bloom, for the adoration of the Lord. (559)

10. With these he filled his flower-basket
And with love his mind; he held a staff;
Thus he hastened to the temple
To weave garlands for the Lord and be of help
During the morning service. (560)

11. As he was thus proceeding on that great *Navami* -Day
The royal elephant -- the puissant smasher of hostile hordes --,
Of *Pukazh-ch-Chola* who ruled
From the fecund city and who was
The illustrious ancestor of King *Anapayan*
(Was getting prepared for the festival). (561)

12. Decorated for the festival, after its bath
In the river, the tusker moved fast in delight great.
Ichor streamed from its body; at the sight of the tusker
People scattered away in fright; its controllers
Ran racing with it; thus came the tusker
Dreadful like a mountain huge. (562)

13. The triumphant tusker with its mahouts
On its back, barged into a (different) street,
Eyed *Sivakamiyar* who was ahead it,
Chased him, plucked the flower-basket
That dangled from his staff and scattered the flowers. (563)

14. This witnessing the mahouts drove the speeding tusker,
As though they conveyed a storm, and were gone.
The devotee -- the wearer of the triple sacred threads --,
Beheld this in agitated wrath; he chased
The musty elephant, to beat it with his staff. (564)

15. The mammoth ran beyond his reach;
The true devotee great could not chase it;
He was too old to continue the chase; he fell down;
He struck the earth with his hand and rose up;
Indescribable was his grief; in anger he cried: '*Sivata.*' (565)

16. "O the wearer of the hide of the musty mammoth, *Sivata!*
O, the puissance of humble ones, *Sivata!*
O, the guiding light of merciful devotees, *Sivata!*
O, the nectar of the clarified, *Sivata, Sivata!* (566)

17. "Should an elephant spill away the blooms fit to
Deck the matted hair where abide the crescent and the *Ganga?*
O wielder of angry bow who burnt the cities
Of *Asuras* that harboured hostility, *Sivata, Sivata!* (567)

18. "He took refuge in Your feet;
You resolved to rid him of his grief;
So when dark *Yama* came chasing him
You smote him with Your roseate foot, *Sivata!* (568)

19. "Stablished in the way unknown even to *Vishnu*,
The devotees as servitors serve the Lord;
What is my worth in this holy company
Meriting Your advent for my rescue? O Endless Ens!"
Thus he cried, and even thus he lamented. (569)

20. *Eri-Patthar* who came thither, heard these words;
He blazed aloft like spiralling flame;
In overflowing wrath he thundered thus:
"Is not the elephant the traditional enemy
Of the devotees of the Lord of the *Ambalam?*
I'll smite it to death." Thus he spake
And held aloft his battle-axe. (570)

21. He approached the summoning devotee and bowed;
He questioned him thus: "Where did it go,
The tusker that involved you in distress deep?"
Unto him he replied thus: "This is the street
Through which it passed, the sinfull one --,
After plucking from my hand the flowers
-- Meet for my Father --, and scattering them on earth." (571)

22. "It cannot survive hereafter!" said he and held
In his palm the fire-breathing battle-axe.
He with the axe looked like fire attended by wind;
He leaped on with terrible speed, resembling
A fiery-eyed lion of cruel claws;
In spiralling wrath he encountered the tusker. (572)

23 When he eyed it he said: "This is sure like
The one whose hide was peeled by the Lord, of yore;
Even if men and gods too try to prevent me
I'll ignore it; I'll sure cut it and kill it."
Then with a flourish of the dazzling axe
Held in his right hand, he pressed the earth
With his feet and sprang on. (573)

24. As he thus leaped, unmindful of the mahouts on its back,
The tusker whose eyes spat fire in sheer anger,
Readied itself to charge him; he dodged it
And leaped again and with the axe felled away
Its peerless trunk, so long and touching the earth.
Can ever dread intimidate the supreme motherly love? (574)

25. When he thus cut away the trunk, the tusker,
In size a black hill, roared like the sea,
Fell down on earth and rolled.
Then he smote the three puissant controllers
Who attended the elephant from either side
And also the two riders; thus he of hill-like shoulders
Killed all the five, and thither stood. (575)

26. Barring the felled ones, others rushed to the guards
Of the palace whose king wears a fragrant garland,
And addressed them thus: "Dead is the royal tusker
And dead too are its mahouts; be quick
To apprise the king of this." (576)

27. When the ostiaries of the gemmy threshold heard them
They hied to the monarch and bowed
At his ankleted feet, and said: "O foeless king,
Your royal elephant has been killed by some;
Thus averred mahouts." (577)

28. When the king who rules the realm
With none to oppose him, heard this,
His shoulders decked with bright gems, shook;
The bees that lay cradled in his garland
Winged out buzzing; his wrath knew no bounds;
He didn't even tarry to ask: "Who did this?"
Like a lion young he darted through the palace-gate. (578)

29. Privy-councillors who came to know of the king's state
Gathered quick the army by beat of drums;
Anon martial banners filled the heavens;
Chariots fitted with cunning contraptions,
Horses and elephants mingled and marched. (579)

30. The innumerable warriors girding their loins tight
Twirled and jumped and rose up everywhere
With countless bows, spears, swords, rods, *pindipalams*,
Pestles strong, discs, axes, tridents and the like. (580)

31. Conches, *tarais*, *ekkalams*, huge drums
High sounding, *pampais* of terrific sound,
Kandai, *tudi* big, *jallari* and *tattai*
Blared martially; with these sounds merged
The loud strains of *cinnams* too;
Thus resounded the martial orchestra
Drowning the noise of rumbling clouds. (581)

32. The noise of organs, the sound of clashing weapons,
The tintinnabulation of bells tied round
The necks of steeds, the trumpeting of tuskers,
The din of chariots and the uproar of warriors:
These into one immense noise blended; it looked
As though, the sea at the end of the *Yuga* roared
With the mighty clouds of destruction. (582)

33. The army fourfold, vast and great, moved
On and on like the whirlwind that would blow
At the time of the dissolution of the cosmos;
Ahead of them on a glorious steed rode he,
The king of the white parasol, cool and merciful,
Through the royal highway. (583)

34. In great speed he reached the place
Where lay the tusker and mahouts, all dead.
He didn't eye there any one hostile,
But only a devotee with a dazzling battle-axe
With a pair of long arms, trunk-like,
Standing thither like a destructive tusker. (584)

35. The one standing before the tusker, very like a hill
Whence cascades water with particles of gold,
Is sure a servitor of the Lord of the *Ambalam*,
Who is the God of the silver hill;
He can't be the killer; so he thought
And thundered thus! "Who indeed is the conqueror?" (585)

36. When the king spake thus, mahouts neared him
And said: "O wearer of fragrant garlands
And chains with brilliant gems inlaid!
Which king in this sea-girt earth can dare
Face your tusker of great puissance?
The one that did the evil deed is none but him
Who stands with the axe." Thus they spake bowing. (586)

37. "He is the devotee of the Lord, the wearer of an ear-ring;
He is a paragon of virtues; he wouldn't kill
Unless wronged; something wrong has happened."
Thus he mused; he stopped the march
Of ichorous elephants and the army;
Down he descended, the Lord of the world,
From his royal horse. (587)

38. "I am indeed blessed with the fruit of *tapas*
Inasmuch as nothing untoward had happened
To this true *tapaswi* when he came before
The musty mammoth, verily a dark hill.
But then the servitor of the Lord of the *Ambalam*
Had been incensed this much; alas, I'm undone;
What mote the wrong be?" Thus he thought
And felt overpowered by fear. (588)

39. The king bade them that neared him move away;
He walked toward the devotee bowing, and said:
"I did not know of this; I heard there
A different version; be that as it may.
For the fault of the tusker, the tusker
And its mahouts have been killed.
Will this suffice? Be pleased to grace me."
Thus he spake and remained standing. (589)

40. The servitor of the God of gods addressed the king thus:
"*Chenni*, this huge tusker plucked the basket of flowers
From *Sivakami Andar* who gathered them
To deck the Lord whose jewels are serpents,
And spilled them; so I smote it down." (590)

41. "When the tusker committed the evil
Its controllers, and mahouts riding on its back,
Would not prevent it; so with their dear lives
They paid for their fault; this is all that
Happened here." When thus he spake, the king
Whose shoulders are mighty as a mountain,
Stricken with fear, fell at his feet and duly hailed him. (591)

42. "This would not suffice for the blasphemy committed;
The Lord and His devotees had been wronged;
I too must be killed; neither should you
Kill me with your auspicious battle-axe;
This is fit for the deed." Thus spake he
Who solicited expiation, and drew out
His sword and handed it over to him. (592)

43. When he eyed the king who drew out
His bright sword dazzling like wild fire,
He cried thus: "Woe's me! I have now witnessed
The boundlessness of the king's love,
The sovereign of infinite glory."
He would not receive the sword; but he knew
That the king would kill himself, if he did not;
So to avert that mishap, he received it in fear. (593)

44. The king stood bowing before the devotee
Who received the sword from him, and said:
"He'll kill me with the sword and rid me
Of my sin; with this beatitude I am to be
By him blessed!" He felt exceedingly happy.
Yeri-Patthar stood fear-stricken. (594)

45. The devotee thought thus: "I've caused the death
Of his mighty mammoth and its mahouts;
Yet would he give me his sword to kill him
In expiation of his sin; oh, I've thought of causing evil
To him -- a devotee great; it is but meet
That I put an end to my life;
That indeed is the fitting solution." (595)

46. Thus thinking he set the sword on his neck
And was about to saw it away; the king then
Burst out thus: "Behold the deed of the great one!
Alas I am lost!" He rushed to him quick
And with his long arms held the devotee's hand and sword. (596)

47. Tight was the grip of the *Chola* king, and great
Was the grief of the *tapaswi* great;
To avert the catastrophe that sprang
From boundless love, there arose from
The bright skyey expanse, by the grace of
The blue-throated Lord, an unbodied voice
Which could be heard by many: (597)

48. "O ye servitors of exceeding devotion
(Fit to be adored by all),
To demonstrate the greatness of loving service
To God, unto men on earth,
The grace of the Lord,
The wearer of the crescent on His crest,
Hath this day caused the spilling of goodly flowers
By the incensed elephant." (Behold the wonder).
The elephant and the mahouts stood resurrected. (598)

49. The devotee unhanded the sword with which
He was to saw away his neck, and fell at the feet
Of the *Chola* king -- the Lord of Neri.
The king too threw away the sword -- a fit weapon of war --,
And hailed the feet of the devotee and fell on earth
Prostrating before him; the celestials showered cool flowers. (599)

50. The king and the devotee then rose up and hailed
The celestial voice; the Lord who indeed
Is the import of the rare *Vedas*
Caused the basket to be filled with the self-same flowers
By His grace at which *Sivakamiyar* marvelled,
And felt happily blessed. (600)

51. The mahouts rose up as if from slumber;
The royal tusker ichorous trumpeted uproariously
Like rumbling clouds; this they drove rejoicing
Before the triumphant king of fragrant garland. (601)

52. The devotee paid obeisance to the king and said:
"I beseech you to ride the great and mighty tusker
That I may feel delighted." The king who came
Thither riding a steed rode the elephant
Under the shade of his white parasol
To honour the command of the servitor. (602)

53. It looked as though the seven oceans merged
And roared as a single main
When the King's armies raised a jubilant uproar;
All the worlds rejoiced and blessed the monarch;
The king wearing as it were the golden feet
Of the *Ambalam's* Dancer, entered his palace. (603)

54. *Sivakamiyar* proceeded to the temple
To perform his service; *Yeri-Patthar*, our Lord's servitor,
Thought thus: "Ha, it is impossible to comprehend
The servitors of the Lord of the Ambalam!"
Contemplating the glory of the *Chola* king
He too set out to perform his service. (604)

55. He continued his service of helping servitors
At their hour of need and spent his days thus;
He pursued his ideal of goodly askesis
And came to be blessed with the stewardship
Of the Lord's hosts in hallowed Mt. *Kailas*. (605)

56. Only the Lord who for ever blesses them
Can gauge the manliness of the servitor of servitors
And the glory of the *Chola* who offered to be
Beheaded with his own sword; who else
Can dare measure their glory and grace
Extending and expanding for ever and ever. (606)

57. I wear on my crown the divine feet
Of *Yeri-Patthar* devoted in boundless love
To the golden feet of Lord *Siva* who wears
On his ruddy matted hair honied *konrai*,
And proceed to chronicle the service
Of *Yenati Nathar*, the adorer of the Holy Ash
Of the Lord of the *Ambalam*, hailed by
The rulers of the celestial regions. (607)

Stanza	Line		
2	5	Anapayan	: This patron of St. Sekkizhar is referred to in the Periyapuranam, eleven times.
	7	Coronated	: The Chola king was crowned in one of the five cities (viz) Pukar, Tiruvaroor, Uraiyoor, Seignaloor and Karur.
7	6	cf. "Parasu hastaya namaha!" (The Hand wields a battle-axe, praise be!) is one of the 108 mantras with which Lord Siva is hailed.	
15	5	Sivata	: A word (uttered in lamentation) invoking the aid of Siva.
22	2	cf. ...... "his brandished steel, Which smoked with bloody execution" - Macbeth, 1,2,17-18.	
30		Pindipalam	: A javelin-like instrument decked with peacock feathers.
		Neri	: The mountain of the Cholas.
		Yeri-Patthar is the same as Eri-Patthar.	

14. The Puranam Of Yenati Nayanar

"I am a servitor of the servitors of Yenati Nathan"

- The *Tiru-th-Tonda-th-Tokai*

1. The tiger-signum of the *Cholas* was inscribed
On Himavant upto which their country extended;
Their parasol white was decked with cool pearls;
In the *Chola* land of garlanded kings
Is ancient *Yeyinanoor* whose glory is borne by
All the eight directions; it is girt with
Cool fields and flowery gardens where bees hum. (608)

2. In its cool fields grow paddy crops lofty
Which are taller than sugarcanes and sweet-canes;
The people flourish thither well-endowed;
It was from this beauteous city *Yenati Nayanar*
Hailed from the clan of *Yeezha-ch-chandrar.* (609)

3. He was devoted to the hoary and hallowed holy ash;
He always wore it and adored it;
In its endless well-being he was stablished;
He trained the king's men in triumphant fencing
In which he was the sole accredited master. (610)

4. All the wealth he derived from his art
He daily expended in love on the devotees
Of the Lord who rules even them that canst not
Comprehend His crown or feet;
He deemed this his fitting service. (611)

5. He pursued his vocation, praised even by his foes;
He flourished unflawed poised in virtue;
He had an agnate *Aticooran* called
Who too was entitled to pursue this art. (612)

6. Among the triumphant fencing masters
He thought, none could him excel;
In sheer hauteur he thrived on this vast earth;
He was indeed full of himself. (613)

7. His occupation gradually waned and his income
As a master of fencing which he pursued
As of right due to his family, decreased.
As *Yenati Nathar's* fortune increased
He deemed him his foe, though but improperly. (614)

8. Like the paling of the moon of ineffectual light
When at dawn the sun rises, he waned
While his envy waxed great; *Aticooran*
Enlisted his kin and other townsmen
To give battle to *Yenati Nathar,*
And was firm in his resolution. (615)

9. With manly kin strong-shouldered and mercenaries
He marched to the foresteps of the house
Of *Yenati Nathar* and shouted thus:
"The right to train men in fencing
Is his who is the victor in the battle."
Thus in exceeding wrath he challenged him. (616)

10. Like the small-eyed fox coming to the dreaded den
Of the fierce-eyed tiger and challenging it,
He, seething in wrath, surrounded the house
In armed strength, and straight challenged him;
Yenati Nathar heard the call assailing his threshold. (617)

11. "Who is he that challenges me?" he asked:
Up he rose like a lion, girded his loins tight,
Decked his foot with heroic anklet,
Took out his sword of steel and shield,
And came out of the house ready for the battle. (618)

12. As he moved out, coming to know of the impending battle,
Many lads trained by him in skilled warfare,
Innumerable warriors, also trained by him and engaged
In other places, and his kith and kin equipped with
Many dreadful weapons of war and swords
Rushed to the rare hero invincible,
And stood on either side of him in battle rank. (619)

13. The foe who called him to battle, stood facing
Him -- the triumphant tiger --, and said:
"The gains of our art of fencing we practise
As of right, should go to him who is the victor;
With our armies we'll fight in the open field." (620)

14. When the foe spake thus, *Yenati Nathar* said:
"If that be your wish, I'll meet you there."
He consented inly rejoicing, and fared forth
To that field and stood triggered for the battle.
The angry armies began their fight. (621)

15. Like rows of clouds winged with lightning,
Like thunder against thunder on earth and sky,
The warriors holding shields and wielding swords
In opposing ranks charged in that battle-field
Where gorcrows and ravens gathered galore. (622)

16. In the hands of warriors -- decked with heroic anklets,
Were shields screening their bodies, and swords;
From opposing sides came they and fought.
Spears encountered spears in that great battle.
It looked like the projection of tongues
Of Naga heroes issuing from their world. (623)

17. Bowmen against bowmen fought in a different part
Of the field where arrows met arrows;
Eyes of warriors were like pits of fire;
When they knit their brows, smoke issued
In steaming columns, the sped arrows
Were verily the sparks of fire. (624)

18. Severed hands still gripping their swords, trembled;
Spears smote chests and were bathed in blood;
Darts severing shoulders stuck to them and fell on earth;
Shields were glued into flesh; feet and anklets broke;
Thus they fought and little recked for their lives. (625)

19. Blood ran in rivers; acephalous bodies roamed;
Slit bodies fell scattered; intestines lay a hill
By the side of piled-up carcases;
Dreadful vultures gathered; *tudis* fell
Slit from their tethering leather;
Thus they fought fierce in the field. (626)

20. In a long duel betwixt two warriors
One cut away both the legs of the other;
Ere he of the thighless body would fall
He threw his dagger at the victor's chest rending it
Into two and thus killed the lion-like hero.
Thus was the field filled with dead men's bodies. (627)

21. When with sharp spears they were charged
They defended themselves with their shields;
The spears fiercely driven smote their shields and chests
And transfixed them; in valour, the opposing ranks
Weighed equal; such valiant warriors who defy number
Lay dead on the field of battle. (628)

22. The bowmen bent their gold-ringed bows
And fought fiercely; when the threads of their bows
Were snapt by darts which came hissing like snakes
From ant-hills, they were undismayed;
They unleashed their swords and continued to fight.
These fierce heroes were like unto patrons, who
Maugre their loss of wealth continued their giving
With whatever was still left with them. (629)

23. The broad faces of the fierce warriors dead
Were considered to be with life animated
By the black crows that winged in the sky;
They would not go near them but passed them by
And continued to wheel their flight.
The bright eyes were like fire amidst the smoke
Of the furnace of blacksmiths. (630)

24. In the ruddy field where fell fierce warriors,
Were many whose intestines gushed out
From their ripped-open bodies; eagles and vultures
Lifted the intestines and with them the heroes;
Even then they continued to fight;
Their flight in the heavens indeed excelled
The kites flown by the celestial *Vidyadara* boys. (631)

25. In the batle fought by opposing hordes
When many a warrior met with death
Yenati Nathar forged his way ahead of
The other fighters, and in wrath smote his foes. (632)

26. His wrathful blade spat fire; his heroic anklet
Resounded; when thus the servitors of the Lord
Whose throat holds in check the venom,
Came to the forefront, he cut away the heads
Of opposing men and did away with the strength
Of their shoulders as well as feet. (633)

27. All those that opposed the peerless hero perished
By his sword; those that would not fight
This witnessing, became like "lust, wrath and delusion"
When knowledge true did dawn. (634)

28. Unable to stomach the loss and atimy
Which ensued for him in the fierce field,
Brandishing his sword, lightning-like,
And gathering them that yet remained alive
Aticooran fought his way to the presence
Of him who is indeed a fierce tiger. (635)

29. He wielded his sword in such swift rounds
That one could only behold the flash of steel;
When he was about to smite *Aticooran*
He dodged the thrust and escaped and fled in shame
From him whose shoulders were decked with gold. (636)

30. Thus routed, dishonoured and driven away, *Aticooran*
Fell on the floor, but would not sleep;
He thought of his plight for a whole night
And concluded thus: "It is by base guile
I'll vanquish him." (637)

31. When the long night ended and day broke
The evil one sent a message to him,
The wearer of garlands, which said:
"Let not others perish in our fight;
To decide our right we two will fight
In the appointed place." (638)

32. When thus informed, *Yenati Nathar* said:
"It suits me ideally." He accepted the challenge.
He added: "Let him come to the field armed
With his fierce sword for the duel." (639)

33. He fared forth to the field armed with
His bright sword and bejewelled shield;
None of his kin knew of this engagement;
He arrived thither and awaited his foe. (640)

34. The evil one who contemplated nought but evil
Knew that the great devotee would never harm one
Whose forehead bore stripes of the holy ash;
Never before had he worn the holy ash. (641)

35. He then wore stripes of the holy ash on his forehead
While his heart concealed the murk of evil;
With his bright sword and bejewelled shield
He came to the field where he was to fight
With the holy soldier of God. (642)

36. He saw the hero who stood there
Like a triumphant lion awaiting its prey;
He neared him screening his forehead
With his shield, and thus the deceiver
Stood before the peerless hero, for the duel. (643)

37. *Yenati Nathar* advanced like a puissant bull
And gained the strategic position to kill his foe.
When he moved his feet, to smite him, he too moved
And removed his shield; it was then the devotee eyed
The holy ash on the forehead of the base one. (644)

38. As he beheld the holy ash, he cried:
"Woe is me! I now behold on him
The blazing beauty of the holy ash which I haven't
Hitherto seen; what else can I do now?
He has become the glorious servitor of the Lord of gods!
Let me so act that he may his wish fulfil." (645)

39. His first thought was to throw away his sword and shield;
He would not do it as he later thought thus:
"The stigma of killing an unarmed warrior
Should not attach him." So he held
His powerful shield and shining sword, as though
He would fight, but stood fully exposing himself. (646)

40. Who can ever divine the heart of the servitor
Who stood thus? The base one achieved his purpose;
The Lord whose ruddy matted hair is like lightning
Knew well his servitor divine, and appeared before him
To bestow grace on him. (647)

41. How can we ever hail the grace of the God of gods?
He had the 'Pasa' of his servitor snapt
By the foeman's sword, and graced him with eternal life
Linked to His very presence.
Then the Lord concorporate with his golden consort vanished. (648)

42. I adore the feet of our deity -- *Yenati Nathar* --,
Whose sole support was nought but the holy ash,
And proceed to narrate the service of our Lord *Kannappar*
Unto the noble Lord of *Kalatthi*
As it lies within my humble knowledge. (649)

Stanza	Line	
2		Ezham means toddy. Candrar are tree-tappers. They are known as Sanars in modern times. Ezham is the name of Sri Lanka. It is said that co-conuts were originally imported only from Ceylon and that Tamil Nadu took to its cultivation only after its contact with Sri Lanka. It is therefore, possible to conclude that some of the co-conut growers cum tree-tappers of Sri Lanka settled in Tamil Nadu even in the dim distant past.
5		cf. "noble foe" - Tennyson.
16		Naga heroes (Heroes of the Serpent world) like Ananta and Karkotaka had long and dreadful tongues with which they could strike, squeeze and impale.
27	3-4	At the dawn of wisdom true, lust, wrath and delusion fritter away.
41		Pasa : Literally a rope; here it means 'the bond'.

15. The Puranam of Kannappa Nayanar

"I am a servitor of Kannappar, the glorious polymath"

- The *Tiru-th-Tonda-th-Tokai*

1. The country of *Kannappar* who attained beatification
By the grace of the Lord of *Kalatthi* who is the Protector
Of the Gospels and the Rider of the Bull and who burnt
The triple cities of the hostile foes is *Potthappi-Nadu*
Of ever-during foison, dight with flowery tanks
And gardens, hailed by bards of renown. (650)

2. His town is hoary Uduppoor girt with a huge fortress
-- An impregnable fence reared on the buried tusks
Of ichorous tuskers --, and guarded by tall hills
From the slopes of which roll cascades with pearls. (651)

3. The dwellers of this town were foresters;
To the branches of wood-apple trees were tethered
Their setters of bent ears; over these trees
Were thrown their nets which lay dangling;
Thither were many trained animals:
Hogs, tigers, bears and antelopes of many types.
They dried their wild rice on mounds and monticules. (652)

4. With strong tiger-cubs and victorious elephant-cubs
The curly-headed infants would thither sport;
With lovely roes, sweet and endearing,
The little daughters of the hunters would romp and play. (653)

5. From the hordes of stout-hearted hunters
Of violent words who wielded victorious weapons,
Were heard the words: "Kill, throw, punch."
Apart from such noise were also heard
The resoundings of small-grained *tudis*,
Bugles and small-eyed little drums
And the shrill noise of gushing cataracts. (654)

6. Thither were huge-seized kine and cattle
Lifted from various places by the dacoit-hunters;
Also were there herds of musty elephants
Which trumpeted aloud whenever clouds
Winged with lightning rumbled in the skies. (655)

7. The foresters were inky dark in complexion;
Violent were they and knew neither dread nor mercy;
They were clad in thick hides; they ate rice minced with meat
And quaffed wild honey; they wielded poisonous darts fiery;
The leader of these hunters was called *Nakan*. (656)

8. Though he had of yore wrought askesis,
By reason of his birth, he did only evil
And deemed it good; he revelled in cruelty.
He was a mighty bowman who was like an angry lion;
His housewife was called *Thatthai*. (657)

9. She hailed from a great and hoary family
Of a warrior race; her *taali*-cord was set with
The teeth of tigers and beads of shells,
And it dangled down the nape of her neck.
She wore a flowery wreath stuck with the feathers
Of peacocks and tender shoots buzzed over by bees,
On her coiffure, and she looked a dreadful lioness. (658)

10. All did declare that this peerless couple
Would not be blessed with a child at all;
But their desire to have a child waxed great;
So they daily adored at the shrine of *Muruka*,
The wearer of fragrant wreaths of flowers
And the holder of the ruddy spear.
Thus they dedicated themselves to Him on purpose. (659)

11. They offered him chanticleers and speckled peacocks;
They planted festoons and hung thereon bells;
They wove beauteous garlands of *katampa* blooms
Buzzed over by bees, as votive offering to Him;
Again for Lord *Muruka* of the long spear
They arranged the festival of grand *Ananku*-dance
Where his glories were hymned in melody. (660)

12. The grace of victorious and glorious *Muruka*
-- The long-armed wielder of the spear, who rode
The majestic peacock and smote the *Krauncha* hill,
The very son of our Lord *Siva* who smote the triple cities --,
Visited *Nakan* the leader of the hunters
Whose bodies were intrenched with deep scars. (661)

13. For the flourishing of the clan of hunters, *Thatthai*
Became gravid; flawless sacrifices were offered;
The ritual-dance was performed; months passed by;
By reason of the limitless askesis wrought of yore,
Even as the briny sea gave birth to the full-moon,
Unto *Thatthai* a son was born. (662)

14. The tusks of elephants rained pearls;
The bamboos too showered their pearls;
The foresters too showered their gems;
The hills also rained their dazzling gems;
These apart the heavens too showered flowers,
As speckled bees and beetles wheeled their flight;
Not only the small-grained *tudis* but celestial *tuntupis* also
Resounded great from the ethereal realms. (663)

15. The throng of people who lived in the little town
And who hailed from the race of rare foresters
Held a jubilant jamboree; like a black hill
Bearing on its crest the dark and huge nimbus
Nakan, the father, upbore on his hill-like shoulders
His son, in delight great. (664)

16. The beauteous child, dark and dazzling,
Grew like a tiger-cub, hailed by the hunters;
He also showed signs that his glory could not be
Measured by the whole world; even thus he grew. (665)

17. The great child could not be lifted with hands;
So mighty and weighty was he;
His father therefore said: "Call him *Thinnan.*"
Loud was the hunters' upro : when he was thus christened.
With beauteous jewels, they that day, decked the child
Whose form was a peerless wonder of splendour
And an incarnation of piety. (666)

18. They invoked their sylvan tutelary deity
And performed unflawed the traditional rites
In keeping with their custom and usage.
They decked him with tender shoots and adorned him
With a waist-cord set with the seeds of jungle neem
And beads of chanks; thus he grew up pretty well. (667)

19. For his each *parva*, they sacrificed fittingly
To their sylvan gods, in festive worship.
Auspicious organs were played, and the hunters
That gathered there sported in great glee.
Thus took place many a celebration. (668)

20. At the end of the first year, when the child
Ceased to toddle and started walking gently
They decked his head of soft hair with *chutti*
Wrought of tiger's claws; him they garlanded
With a string set with the teeth of tigers
And severed quills of porcupines. (669)

21. His feet were decked with resounding *chalankai*
Set with bright gems and pretty tintinnabula;
His waist was adorned with a cord set with
Tiny coins and lovely jewels; his hands were
Decked with bracelets wrought of ivory;
Gemmy *kutampais* dazzled from his ear-lobes;
Thus he glowed flawless when he played
As a little child in the street. (670)

22. To the great delight of his parents
He walked forth in pretty little gait;
His lovely words of prattle were soaked in his saliva
Of sheer nectar, holier than the water of the *Ganga*
And fell from his roseate lips enchantingly. (671)

23. When a trained tiger oped its mouth agape
He deemed it a cave and into it inserted his golden hand;
His father in love brandished a green twig
At which his two beauteous eyes which can cure
The harm to be suffered by the sun and the moon,
Were suffused with tears; when these tear-drops
Rolled down his cheeks, *Thatthai* kissed them away. (672)

24. He plied the go-cart shaped like a small *tudi;*
He caught hold of the tethering leash of a dog,
Tugged at it and snapped it; he kicked away
With his pretty feet -- tender as shoot --, the toy-houses
Built by the little girls of the hunting clan;
He played with the infants of the bowmen
And thus sported in great fun in all the huts. (673)

25. Varied were his sport and pastime, and he was now
Six summers old; with catapults and traps
He played with heroic hunter-boys in flowery gardens;
His play-field extended into the nearby jungle
Beyond the ivory fence set with *Uzhuvais.* (674)

26. He chased the young rabbits swift, cubs of jungle hogs
And striped tigers and also the pups of red ferocious dogs,
Captured them and tethered them to the trees
That grew aloft in the foreyard of his house.
Countless were the animals reared by *Kannappar.* (675)

27. At dusk a matron of the hunting tribe would
Twirl round him a platter of smoking mustard,
Feed him and put him to bed in the place assigned;
At dawn she would feed him with meat
And leave him to pursue his sport.
Thus rolled on a few years, and he now reached
The *parva* when he could be taught to wield the bow. (676)

28. His father felt glad that he reached the proper age;
He hugged him close with his strong shoulders;
Desiring to train him well in archery
He gathered the old and veteran bowmen;
After due consultation with them all, he fixed
An auspicious day and proclaimed it to his tribesmen. (677)

29. All the heroic leaders of the hills in the neighbourhood
Heard the loud announcement through beat of *tudi*
That *Thinnan* -- the son of the hunters' king *Nakan*,
Whose deeds proclaim him to be greater than
Men of great intellect, the one born on earth
By the grace of Lord *Kandan* --, is about to be
Initiated in the art of archery. (678)

30. From all directions came the practising bowmen
With gems of the hills, gold and pearls,
And also hides of tigers, tusks of murderous tuskers,
Heaps of peacock feathers, (wild) honey,
And countless jars of liquor, varieties of meat
Fruits and tubers too. (679)

31. They filled the little town with such wealth;
The bournes of the peerless town could not contain
What they brought with them in such abundance.
The King of hunters, *Nakan* then announced:
"Perform all the rituals of worship to the gods
To the delectation of the multifoliate kith and kin
For the initiatory ceremony of archery." 680

32. The craftsmen who had duly wrought a bow
For the occasion, held it; the bow of *Siva* who wears
Honied *konrai* -- the hill of *Meru* -- did excel Mt. *Mantara*
Which but churned poison out of the main;
On the bow like unto Mt. *Meru*, which would
For *Siva* procure fitting victuals from jungle
They wound the *raksha*. (681)

33. With the selfsame gut of the fierce tiger
Which was used as *raksha* for the bow,
At the hour propitious they wound the beauteous wrist
Of hill-like *Thinnan*, the son of *Nakan*
And the scion of the hunters' tribe.
All the foresters loud proclaimed their benediction. (682)

34. The expert cooks of the hunting clan cooked
Wild rice and other grains and also millet soft
Along with the hard grains of bamboos.
These were minced with tubers and meat;
The food-heap looked like a hill;
The wielders of angry bows gathered there to eat. (683)

35. Some feasted on the powder of red millet and honey;
Some ate cooked flesh soaked in honey;
Some took wood-apples mixed with honey;
Some gorged winged white-ants well-cooked;
Thus the hunters gormandised various dishes. (684)

36. The visitors from adjoining hills and the local people
Ate exceedingly well; as the sun crossed the /meridian
The hunters and huntresses started bibing
Limitless liquor of various types.
Thus were they all happily inebriate during the fete. (685)

37. They wore wreaths of green leaves and many types
Of garlands and also jewelled leathern girdles;
They decked themselves with beads of shells;
They also wore flawless *vetchi* garlands
And other chaplets befitting them.
Then they came near the dreadful bow of the blemishless master. (686)

38. *Tondaka*-drum, bugles, *tudiṣ* and flutes of bamboo
Resounded and filled all the directions;
Coupled with this, rose the din of heroic hunters
Rumbling through the heavens; in such festal spree
They circumambulated the little town. (687)

39. The hunters danced the *vari*-dance; the huntresses
The *tunankai*-dance; with joy danced
The awesome women divine; thus did they daily
Spend their days of the bow-festival
And on the seventh day, doubled their celebrations. (688)

40. At the hour when the sun stood midmost in the sky
Benedictions resounded from everywhere and mingled
With the orchestration of many organs;
Through the master of archery of their hoary tribe
They caused *Thinnan*, the bright and dark bull,
To hold the martial bow. (689)

41. All the rites and rituals were duly performed
In the slope of the beauteous mountain;
From the day when he first held the bow
Each day he practised the art of archery;
The skill of him -- the lion of foresters,
And my own deity --, was crowned with consummation. (690)

42. He who was like 'the congregation of splendorous piety ever-growing'
Became a great master of the bow and other weapons;
With ever-crescent beauty he shone a full moon;
He was now sixteen years old. (691)

43. As *Thinnan* throve thus, the chief
Of the sylvan town where dwelt fierce hill-men
-- The dark strong-shouldered *Nakan* --,
For countless days through hills and forests
Hunted with his beauteous bow, quelled foes,
Lifted cattle and kept watch over his hill ranges.
He grew old and was enfeebled;
He was no longer the master of his bow. (692)

44. When fierce forest boars, tigers, bears, *kadamai*,
Jungle-cows, angry-eyed *marai* and other wild animals
Thronged thick and laid waste the fields and gardens
In the great slopes of the beauteous hills
The hunters assembled, and as a body
Called on *Nakan*, the chief of their clan,
-- The wearer of cool wreath of flowers --,
And said: "Lack of periodical hunting
Has caused havoc." (693)

45. When *Nakan* heard them, he considered
His ageing plight and addressed them thus:
"On account of my old age I am unable
To indulge in hunting as before; may you all
Accept the leadership of my son."
When he spake thus, they felt sad
And eventually grew glad; they hailed
His feet and addressed him thus: (694)

46. "All these years we abode under your bow;
We ate and flourished trouble-free;
Father, we'll follow the way indicated by
Your mandate; no other path will we pursue;
Moreover you have blessed us with your son,
Thinnan who is the great scion of your line;
Call your son who is an expert archer and invest
Him with the right to rule the hills."
Thus they spake in delight great. (695)

47. When they spake thus, *Nakan* sent for his son
And uttered these words: "My son is to pursue
His maiden-hunting in the hilly forests;
Call the chief priestess of my clan to offer
Sacrifices pleasing to the sylvan deities."
When hunters apprised her of his words
The old matron hastened in joy to *Nakan*. (696)

48. The priestess wore a chaplet of speckled jungle shoots;
Her ears were adorned with rings cut from antler;
On her forehead was a *tilaka* of musk;
She wore a garland made of small chowries
Painted blue like the peacock's neck;
Her shrunken breasts were sagging;
She wore a garment of bark into which
Were stuck the feathers of peacock.
She blessed him with flowers and wild rice
And stood hailing the martial king of hunters. (697)

49. Addressing the aged matron -- a huntress --, he said:
"Mother, are you free from indigence?
Do you live well?" Hearing this, she blessed him
And said: "As you have allotted of yore,
I get goodly meat soft, winged white ants,
Honey, products of hills and other products too;
Abundant is the provision. Well, what for did you call me?" (698)

50. "*Thinnan*, my flawless son, is to be invested by me with
The chieftainship of our clan and is to become
The leader of hunters who wield strung bows;
He should excel me as a hunter and should be
Successful in annexing the realms of foes;
So, perform sacrifices to the sylvan deities
That they may with joy relish the offerings."
Thus spake he, relieved of all his worries. (699)

51. The priestess who heard him speak thus, said:
"When I came here borne by love in joy, I espied
Such good omens which I have never witnessed;
Surely your son *Thinnan*, the wielder of the victorious bow,
Will prove to be far greater than you."
She blessed him once again and went away with
A surfeit of things required by way of offerings
To gladden the woodland gods. (700)

52. When the priestess departed, *Thinnan* came to call on
His hunter-father at his bidding;
His tuft of hair was decked with a fragrant chaplet
And he looked like a blue gemmy hill;
Bowmen came with him, admiring him.
When he hailed his father's ankleted feet
He embraced him with his strong shoulders
And bade him be seated on a tiger-skin. (701)

53. Addressing his son who was before him
He said: "I think not to pursue hunting
As before, since I am now grown old;
Be invested with the right to rule and protect
The foresters and flourish greater than I;
May you annex the realms of foes and be
Victorious in all your hunting expeditions;
May you nobly bear the office of your forebears."
This said, he gave him his Belt and Sword. (702)

54. He reckoned the true plight of his father
And felt sad; he also knew that the ancient right
Of chieftainship had to be perpetuated;
So, he wouldn't say 'no' to his father's wish.
He fell at his ankleted feet and hailed him;
Then he received the Belt and the Sword, the insignia
Of his office; unto *Thinnan* whose mind
Unfailingly accepted the responsibility of rulership
The great father in joy addressed these words: (703)

55. "May you ever do good to the hunters
Of our clan and to our kith and kin;
May you foster them even better than I;
May you live in great foison as the conqueror
Of hostile realms; you will meet with
Many an opportunity to go a-hunting;
May you even now rise for the hunt
With these fierce bowmen." Thus spake he,
The one poised in his true nature, and gave leave to *Thinnan*. (704)

56. Thinnan the strong who was like a victorious lion
Of ruddy eyes, prostrated at his father's feet,
The courageous one of fierce eyes and great askesis.
He took leave of him, and with the hunters moved away;
He bathed in the auspicious water of the spa
And rested in his abode; when day broke
He went to the armoury in joy with hunters
Who were experts in adorning him with arms. (705)

57. They straightened his dense curly hair and wound it;
They decked it with chaplets of shoots.
They stuck therein bright feathers of peacock;
They also decked him with garlands of *kurinji*
And jasmine, buzzed over by bees. (706)

58. Round his forehead they fastened a band of wool
Set with peacock quills and beans of *kunri;*
They adorned his ear with ear-rings wrought
Of white lustrous shells bright like the full-moon. (707)

59. His neck was adorned with a white necklace
Wrought of lustrous beads of chanks and gems;
Into these were stuck crescent-shaped teeth of hogs;
He wore *sannaveeram*, the triumphal garland
Which was wrought of tiger-skin studded with gems. (708)

60. On his chest dangled a garland of ivory beads;
On his shoulders *bahu-valayas* were set;
His forearms bore bracelets and his hands
That would ply darts with the loud noise
Matching the rumbling of clouds, were with
Small wreaths decked. (709)

61. On his waist he wore a tiger-skin set with
Peacock-feathers; white beads of shells were sewn
On its border, he wore a long garment of hide;
A belt girdled him; the sword with the leathern scabbard
Was fastened to his waist with a leathern strap
Dyed ruddy with deodorant stuff. (710)

62. On his foot he wore the heroic anklet;
On the soles of his feet he fastened fitting footwear;
He bowed before the bow -- mighty and weighty --,
And duly circumambulated it; he held the bow
Pressing it with his foot and strung it;
He invoked the deity as he bore the bow thus. (711)

63. With his roseate fingers he strummed
The bow, the twang of which was like that of
The rumbling of the huge and dark nimbus;
He twanged the bow that the world might be
Rid of its misery, and red-eyed animals
-- Huge and angry --, might flee away. (712)

64. *Thinnan* who was like unto a valiant lion
Filled his quiver with a good many choice arrows;
He commanded reconnoitrers to accompany him;
Thus he came to the place where resounded
The small *tudis* of hunting throngs;
The blessings of these filled all the directions;
Thither he stood and his darts examined. (713)

65. When the bowmen ready for the chase
Neared him, unto *Thinnan* of blue hue,
From whom blazed lustre as from nelumbo,
Came the priestess who had sacrified to the gods,
With the remains of the offerings of honey,
Goodly flesh, toddy, *charu*, puffed rice and the like. (714)

66. The swarming hunters drew aside, as she came there;
She went near *Thinnan* and sprinkled *Akshata*
On his forehead, and said: "Even your father's father
Wasn't blessed like you; great is your might;
It is not to be measured even by us." (715)

67. He duly honoured the priestess who thus blessed him
And gave her leave to depart; he who was like a huge cloud
Of the rainy season held the mighty bow;
Bent on hunt in all its splendour, he plied his steps. (716)

68. Before glorious *Thinnan* who rose for the chase, lion-like,
Innumerable valiant bowmen wearing footwear
And long garments of hide and holding
Bows and arrows, marched in strong groups. (717)

69. The hunters held the long leashes of hounds
By their fierce hands; with their red tongues hanging
Setters ran before them, not in any proper order;
It was like the treading of the roseate feet
Of Dame Victory who abode in the bows of heroes. (718)

70. The cynegetic hordes advanced with huge nets and bows;
Thinnan, the great one, who was to snap all bonds,
Followed them; many were they who walked, carrying
Leather-straps and nets into the forests
And hills on whose crests clouds did rest. (719)

71. The great *Vedas* for ever pursue, but behold not, the Lord,
Who on His matted hair sports the cool crescent,
Adampu and *konrai* flowers; it was *Thinnan*
Who was endowed with the Eye to behold Him.
Before him from all sides marched the hunters
With the pack of their trained animals. (720)

72. Trumpets taratantaraed in the front ranks;
From the sides resounded kettle-drums;
Pampais were played; hands clapped keeping time;
Thus hied the hunters in great hullabaloo. (721)

73. The march of the long-armed and fierce hunters
Into the vast and green boscage was like unto
The tumultous flowing of black-waved *Kalindi*
Into the billowy main immense. (722)

74. When reconnoitrers tracking the foot-prints,
Returned and announced that in the southard jungle
Of the hill-range, herds of deer, boars strong, *marais*
And other animals had gathered,
With straps and nets rushed the hunters in all sides. (723)

75. They cleared the branches and fastened with straps
The whole jungle, a *yojna* square; huge strong nets
Were hung everywhere; it was dreadful to behold;
When they completed their work, the hunters
Of dumose hair came before *Thinnan*. (724)

76. *Thinnan* the fierce bowman joined the hunters;
The animals were roused from their lairs
In the slopes of the cloud-capped mountain;
Hounds were unleashed to seize them;
With arrows, long and sharp, he went into the jungle
Where nets were spread to trap the animals. (725)

77. Hunting dogs were set on the beasts;
Hunters advanced with well-chosen darts;
Tudis and *pampais* resounded everywhere;
With hands and mouths they clapped and shouted;
The hiding animals were ferreted out thus
From their hides-out in the woodland. (726)

78. Jungle hogs, deer of many types, bears,
Herds of strong stags, bisons, tuskers, fierce tigers,
Marais and wild animals were roused.
When they leaped in spiralling wrath, the hunters
Smote them all with their arrows. (727)

79. Severed were the legs, the haunches and the heads of stags;
With their intestines ripped open, died a few *marais;*
With their bodies rent by darts, down fell
The wild cattle of the jungle; split by darts
Many antelopes jumped and fell and died. (728)

80. When the napes of necks of boars were slit
By darts, fiery blood gushed forth from the wounds;
More and more darts were rained on them
And they sped piercing and dragging their heads
And stood stuck between the teeth of tigers
Which came running with their mouths agape.
It looked as though the tigers came thither
To prey upon the fierce hogs. (729)

81. The arrows of heroes that plied their darts
From behind the stags, pierced through them
From behind and passed out through their heads
And again whizzed piercing through the heads
Of stags that came running from the opposite direction.
It looked like a fight between opposing stags. (730)

82. The arrows of *Thinnan* who looked like
A black hill rushing with a bow,
Smote and killed the animals that came
Fronting him; the darts further whizzed
And smote warring elephants and angry lions.
It looked as though day merged with night
When bright lions and black elephants
Fell side by side by his ceaseless arrows. (731)

83. The stags that jumped and touched the great clouds
Were pursued by the arrows of ankleted heroes;
This was like unto the pursuit of *Rakhu* of the deer
That slipped from the lustrous *Chandra-mandala;*
Thus did jump many a deer. (732)

84. As the darts got stuck in their bodies, they could not
Stand firm in the slopes of the mountains;
They twirled and fell on the thick leafy shrubs.
This was like unto the resting of clouds on sea
To suck the water thereof; thus fell on the jingle sward
Black *marais*, boars and bisons galore. (733)

85. When in dread the animals rushed tearing the nets
The hounds blocked in wrath their escape
And seized them; this was like unto the act
Of the five senses which blocked the escape
Of mind which in its effort to gain the righteous path
Tried to tear and slip away from the toils
Of the resultants of the two-fold deeds. (734)

86. The murderous hunters who faced the wild beasts
And slaughtered them in abundance
Would not hunt elephant-cubs whose legs
Were like *tudis* and whose ears were bent.
Neither would they hunt the young ones that romped
And ran making noise; nor would they harm
Toddling animals gravid. (735)

87. While thus the murderous chase was pursued,
A boar rushed forth in great tumult; to fright
It put, even the tuskers; the jungle itself trembled;
It thundered like the huge and dark nimbus;
Its jutting eyes spat fire. (736)

88. *Thinnan* who was a lion among the hunters
That pursued the boar to down it,
Chased with great speed the fleeing boar;
Other hunters lost track of the beast;
He alone pursued it in its solitary flight;
There were indeed two who would not from him part. (737)

89. *Nanan* and *Kadan* were they, mighty heroes;
They anon joined *Thinnan*, the ruler of the hills;
The boar escaped from their darts and dogs,
And took to its heels in the long umbrageous slope of the hill. (738)

90. The eyes of the boar which were jutting out
Fiercely blazed with fire, and were like the beans of *kunri*;
Its roar was truly like the rumbling of clouds;
The huge boar after covering a great distance
By constant running eventually stood
At the foot of the hill amidst the boscage. (739)

91. *Thinnan*, the chieftain of murderous hunters
Gauging the plight of the beast that stood amidst
The trees, didn't think of slaying it with choice darts;
He opted for a straight encounter with it;
He drew out his flashing blade and felled it. (740)

92. Beholding the boar cut into two by *Thinnan*,
The red-eyed master-archer of the hunting tribe,
Nanan said: "*Kada!* we chased the beast
For many a league and became fatigued;
Ha, the he-man slew it." Then both fell at his feet. (741)

93. They addressed *Thinnan* thus: "By reason of the chase
We are esurient; we will now fry this;
You may eat a little of it; we too will eat it
And drink some water and then we'll gently walk back
To the forest of the triumphant hunt." (742)

94. When they so spake, *Thinnan* addressed them thus:
"Is potable water available even in this jungle?"
Nanan answered him thus: "Beyond this grove
Of teak, near the hill range courses the cool *Ponmukali*. (743)

95. When *Nanan* the wielder of the angry bow spake thus
Thinnan said: "Let us go there; carry this boar
With you. "He moved on and after crossing half a league
He beheld the garden of the divine mountain
Where abides *Siva*, the Rider of the red-eyed Bull. (744)

96. Thinnan said: "*Nana!* We'll go to the hill
That appears *before us.*" *Nanan* in reply said:
"If you go there, you'll behold a splendid sight;
On the top of this sky-high *Tirukkalatthi* Hill
Abides in splendour the Lord of the Tufted Crest, the Remover
Of all kinks; Him we can adore." (745)

97. "What else is there to do? As I near this, the burden
Of my life gets decreased, love wells up in me:
My heart filled with a different longing, flies to it;
Where indeed is the Lord? Proceed." Thus *Thinnan*. (746)

98. *Thinnan* then moved fast and him followed the two;
They reached the beauteous river *Mukali* on whose
Either bank were shored up pearls from lofty bamboos,
Logs of agalloch and sandal, gems from hills,
Gold and diamond, heaped into the sand-dunes. (747)

99. He had the boar unloaded in the cool shade
Of a tree near the bank of that river;
He bade Kadan -- the wielder of the bent bow --, thus:
"Make two sticks to churn out fire; we'll
Go up the hill, behold (Him) and return."
Thus spake *Thinnan*, and went with *Nanan*. (748)

100. In the pellucid water of the cool *Mukali* which bore
The flowers of the gardens studding its bank
And buzzed over by bees, *Thinnan* whose *chinta*
Was getting clarified, entered; he went through
The river in joy and was filled with delight great.
Thus, even thus, he arrived at the foot of the hill. (749)

101. The sun was in the mid-most heavens;
On the top of the divine hill were resounded
The five celestial *tuntupis;* they roared like sea.
When *Thinnan* asked Nanan, what it was, he said:
"Perhaps, it is the loud buzzing of bees which circle
Round the great honey(-combs) in the hill, sip the nectar
Of flowers in swarms and fly
With the hiss of rustling wings." (750)

102. Limitless love welled up in him by reason
Of the fruition of his askesis in his past incarnations;
Boundless longing transformed into devotion deep;
As he moved toward the hill, his bones melted
And a great yearning possessed him. (751)

103. His love and *Nanan* preceded him and *Thinnan* ascended
The cool hill; he climbed the immense flight of steps
-- All the graded *tattwas* (six and thirty) --, as though
He would attain *Siva* whose form is *Sakti*.
Thus he plied his steps on the straight path of the lofty hill. (752)

104. Even before he beheld the Lord whose matted hair
Sports the crescent, His looks of grace were cast on him;
All the fetters of his life slipped away;
Under the shade of His lustrous light he was wrought
Into the form of very love. (753)

105. He beheld the unique deity that blazed like a shoot
On the crest of the sky-high *Tirukkalatthi* Mountain;
Great love spiralled in him and bore him up;
Swiftly and with speed he ran passionately;
He hugged Him; ha, he kissed Him. (754)

106. Sighs he heaved for a long time; the hair
On his body stood erect as he felt thrilled
In every pore of his; his eyes rained tears.
"Ha! I, the servitor, have here found my Lord!"
It was as though peerless love assumed his form. (755)

107. "Like tribesmen of fierce and relentless hunters
You abide here alone and with help none,
In the jungle infested with elephants, bears,
Tigers, lions and other wild beasts.
Woe's me!" Thus he cried and grieved sore. (756)

108. He knew not that his bow had slipped from his hand;
Thinnan who was like unto a bull of prowess, said:
"Who has done this good deed of strewing these leaves
And flowers too, and poured water?" When thus questioned
Nanan who stood near him said: "I have known of this." (757)

109. "Your father of skilled puissance and I, after a great hunt
Came to this hill once; the deity was bathed in cool water;
Strewn with fitting leaves and flowers and also fed
By a Brahmin then, who also muttered a few words.
It is he who should have done this." Thus he. (758)

110. When great love welled up inly and uninterruptedly
And wouldn't be contained within,
Thinnan thought: "These are perhaps good deeds
Esteemed by the Lord of *Tirukkalatthi.*"
He resolved to hold fast to this service; his love so swelled
That he was unable to part from the Supreme One. (759)

111. "I have found Him; but He abides alone;
There are none to feed Him with meat; neither can I
From him part; what am I to do? Him must I get
The needed meat." Thus he resolved. (760)

112. He would move away but would come back at once;
He would hug Him and move away again;
He would eye Him in love; he became like unto
The cow parted from its young one, newly delivered;
He would say: "O Lord, for your feeding, I'll myself
Secure delicious and soft and flawless meat
And be here eftsoon." (761)

113. "Who would remain here as help for you?
This thought prevents my parting from you;
Neither can I suffer you to be hungry"
Thus he spake and his eyes showered tears.
He somewhat grew resolute and with his long bow
Moved away after hailing Him with his flowery hand. (762)

114. Parting from the divine presence in reluctance
Down he descended from the hill that stretched afar;
Him followed *Nanan*; all other longings of *Thinnan*
Were gone; he was borne on by sheer love;
Through the beauteous bank of *Ponmukali* he crossed
The river and reached the other bank and thence
Moved into the garden laden with fresh flowers. (763)

115. *Kadan* came before him and addressed him thus:
"I churned out fire; you can verify for yourself
That the parts of the tusked-boar are there intact;
We have to return; why were you so much delayed?"
When he spake thus, *Nanan* who stood nearby said: (764)

116. "There in the hill beholding the Lord he hugged Him close;
Like the iguana holding fast to the curved cavern hollow
He would not lose his grip; he but came here
To secure meat and flesh for the Lord to eat;
He had forsaken the chieftainship of our race;
He is possessed by the Lord." (765)

117. "What have you done *Thinna?* What bewilderment is this?
Aren't you the hereditary chief of us, the hunters?"
When he spake thus he wouldn't even cast a glance on him;
He fried the huge boar in the fire and gathered
The delicious flesh with various darts. (766)

118. The flesh stuck to the darts, was fried in fire;
The flesh was thus cooked rich; he chewed the flesh
To find out how it tasted, and gathered
The delicious morsels in a cup of teak-leaves. (767)

119. The two that stood beside him, exclaimed thus:
"Ha, his bewilderment has grown apace; he fries
The rare boar-flesh and spits it back;
Sure is he esurient; but he eats not; he keeps mum;
Neither does he bother to feed us with this;
He throws away the rejected pieces." (768)

120. "This *Thinnan* is sure possessed; him to disenchant
We know not; we must hie to our town and come back
With the priestess and *Nakan*, to cure him;
Let us fare forth to that forest and with our servants
Proceed to our town." (769)

121. *Thinnan* knew not of the departure of the hunters;
He swiftly made ready the cup of flesh for carrying;
For the ablutions of the deity he filled his hallowed mouth
With the pure water of the river; he also stuck to his hair
Many flowers and leaves, all fresh. (770)

122. He took the bow and fierce darts in one hand;
In the other he bore the cup of soft and savoury flesh.
"My sweet Lord will sure be hungry" he thought feelingly,
And reached the Lord's hill in great swiftness. (771)

123. He felt that the Lord was languishing in hunger;
He rushed and beheld the *Swayampu* Lord;
He removed the strewn flowers on His crown
With his beauteous slippered foot; he besprinkled
The deity with the water stored in his mouth.
Lo, it was his love that he let flow on the crown
Of the Lord -- the Purifier. (772)

124. The fresh flowers and leaves that he bore on his hair
He lovingly placed on the crown of the Lord
Of *Kalatthi* Hill; *Thinnan* whose roseate palm
Held the bow, then placed before the Lord, the cup
Of woven leaves which held the nectarean offering. (773)

125. "I have chosen the daintiest portions of flesh and fat
And fried them on the points of arrows;
They are well-cooked and roasted; I have crushed them
With my teeth, tasted them and gathered
The toothsome morsels; these are delicious indeed;
Be pleased to partake of them." Thus he. (774)

126. Having fed the Lord inducing Him with endearing words
The prince of hunters desired to feed the God
Of *Tiru-k-Kalatthi* Hill with still more savoury flesh;
Sensing his swelling love, the sun hailed him
Folding his myriad rays and into the mountain descended. (775)

127. Now came still evening on; into night melted twilight;
Dreading the traffic of wild beasts, and poised in true love,
He who was like a dark hill, held fast his bow
And stood firm beside the Lord. (776)

128. Even by achieving the well-nigh impossible askesis,
Even by abiding in forests of cloud-capped hills
Munis and celestials could seldom behold the Lord.
With growing longing and love unabated, he eyed
The Lord and stood straight before Him;
Thus he stood till the dense darkness dissolved. (777)

129. As on one side shone with the moon's lustre
The heap of bright-rayed pearls of bamboos,
And on the other issued the brilliance
Of gems in caves, spat out by serpents,
It looked as though that the moon and the sun
Blending their rays came thither on the new-moon day
To adore the Hill of the ear-ringed Lord. (778)

130. Thither swelled the rays of good many gems;
Emeralds and sapphires also blazed black-rayed.
It looked as though night and darkness besieged by
The sun and the moon, fled away in fright.
(Such was the war of rays -- black and white.) (779)

131. By reason of the blaze of the *Jyoti Vrikshas*,
The lustre of pearls kept in caves by monkeys
To serve as lamps thither at night,
And the rare effulgence immense that issues
From holy men who have quelled the senses five,
There is nought as night in the hallowed Hill
Of our Father, the Lord of *Tiru-k-Kalatthi*. (780)

132. With the passing of the watches of night, murk faded away;
He, the sleepless hero who was like a black sea,
Heard the pipe of the half-awakened birds
And was impelled by a desire to secure food for the Lord. (781)

133. He was an adept in hunting the big-bellied
And short-legged boars, huge stags, grazing deer
And other varieties of wild beasts; he contemplated
The hour to hunt them, and fared forth in that
Dim hour when forms appeared indistinct.
With his bow he marched on, after adoring
The munificent Lord. (782)

134. Chasing away the dense darkness, the sun
Rode his chariot revealing his visage;
As *Thinnan* whose form was that of true love
Was bent on his hunt unique, in the jungle,
As if to reveal the woodland beasts, he drew away
The black curtain and rose on high with his rays;
It looked as though he waved his hand to *Thinnan*. (783)

135. In unison with the laws expounded in the Agamas,
To perform his regular ritual worship,
With duly gathered flowers, holy water and other
Articles of *pooja*, thither came *Sivagochariar*,
The *Muni* of sacerdocy, blessed with the askesis
To adore the dark-throated Lord of the Hill
-- The Panacea great of all ills. (784)

136. Having arrived at the Hill, as he neared
Poised in spiritual discipline, the Lord of gods,
He saw scattered pieces of bones and cooked flesh.
He jumped and leaped, and bounced
Away from them, and cried: "Woe is me!
What rank pollution! Who did this?" He wilted. (785)

137 "The dare-devil hunters have wrought this;
O Lord of gods, could You suffer their trespass?
How could You permit this contamination?"
He cried and quaked and fell down grief-struck. (786)

138. "What is it that I do here delaying the *pooja*
Of the Lord, the shoot of lustre on the crest of this hill?"
Thus spake he, and swept away with the holy broom
The pieces of flesh, bones, leaves, prints of slippers,
And the foot-prints of a dog; then in love he hied
To the divine *Mukali*, performed his ablutions
And hastened back to the adytum. (787)

139. He performed the expiatory rites of cleansing,
And bowed before the Lord; then with the articles of *pooja*
He commenced his holy ritual-worship as is his wont;
He completed in order the flawless ablutions of the Lord,
The recitation of mantras and the other rites of *pooja*.
At the end he hailed the feet of the First One. (788)

140. He hailed the Lord with the *mantras* of the *Vedas*
That affirm thus: "Lord *Siva* is the Ens Entium!"
He then took leave of the Lord whose matted hair
Sports the splendorous moon, and with a mind pacified
He repaired to the woods where he performed askesis. (789)

141. Thus departed the great *muni;* I will now narrate
The peerless hunting of the prince of hunters,
The one of beauteous tuft, dazzling inky dark;
I will narrate how he bent his bow and displayed
His skill in the forest; thus will I rid me of evil. (790)

142. The huge hogs that grazed in the fields
On the slopes of craggy hills, were downed by *Thinnan*
Who thither came as he left the Holy Hill.
He ambushed at a vantage-point by which
Should pass the antelopes in a single file
On a narrow path, and he killed them whereby
He but conferred on them grace divine. (791)

143. He would imitate the call of a stag;
When deer came responding to the call,
He smote them all, with his sharp darts;
He would track the foot-prints of antelopes
Reach their slumbering habitat and kill them.
He also hunted many a *katama;*
Thus would he complete his hunt as the rays
Of the sun grew fierce. (792)

144. He gathered all the hunted animals in one place;
He drew out his sword and chopped off *arani* sticks;
He broke several twigs laden with the hives of honey-bees;
He wove broad-based cups of teak leaves. (793)

145. He chopped off fuel-wood and piled them up;
He churned out fire and kept it ablaze;
With sharp darts he severed the fat and the flesh;
He then fried what ought to be fried. (794)

146. With sharp darts he tore and carved the flesh;
He gathered into a different cup the fleshy parts
Of animals; on points of arrows he fried them fittingly;
To make a holy offering, he desired to taste it. (795)

147. Like placing in the ruddy mouth of *Agni*
The offerings that are to be conveyed to the celestials,
Into his holy mouth he put the fried flesh to taste it
For making an offering to the Lord of *Kalatthi*. (796)

148. He gathered into a cup the tasted food cooked fittingly;
He poured honey into it and mashed it;
He fared forth swift, gathering flowers, leaves
And water for holy ablutions as before;
Thus toward his deity he hastened. (797)

149. The Lord of the hunters ascended *Tiru-k-Kalatthi* Hill
And reached the presence of the Lord of gods;
As before he removed the Brahmin's offerings
And peformed the *pooja* after his fashion. (798)

150. He placed before Him the cup of nectarean food
And implored Him thus: "This is even more delicious
Than what I offered earlier; with the flesh of hog
I have cooked the daintiest portions of stag,
Antelope and *katama;* I too have tasted it;
It is mixed with honey; it'll taste sweet; (eat)." (799)

151. Thus he feasted the Lord and performed His *pooja*.
Poised in the Godly way peerless; love swelled
More and more in him; he would not slumber
At night; during day he would go a-hunting. (800)

152. The great *Muni* came every day; great was
His grief when he witnessed the remains
Of the *pooja* performed by the prince of the jungle;
He would clear them, perform purificatory rites
And do *pooja* as ordained in the *Agamas*
Poised in his righteous way. (801)

153. *Nanan* and *Kadan* broke the intelligence
To *Nakan* who grieved forsaking food and sleep;
He came with the priestess, and in manifold ways
Essayed to cure his son, but in vain.
Abandoning hope, they hied back to their place. (802)

154. As the Lord of *Kalatthi* had cast on him
His looks of Grace, like iron getting transmuted
By the sweet alchemic touch, his two-fold *karma*
And triple *mala* were totally done away with;
His body had come to be wrought of ethereal fire;
He moved about as love embodied.
Is he within the ken of any one's comprehension? (803)

155. He performed *pooja* for the Lord in the way
Known to him; the great *muni* who did *pooja*
As ordained in the ever-abiding *Agamas*
Implored Him thus: "O my Lord, I could not find him
Who had wrought this; I pray that You be pleased
To put an end to this by Your divine grace." (804)

156. That night, the Lord-Brahmin whose matted hair
Flashes fulgurously, appeared in the *somnium*
Of the great *muni*, and spake thus in grace:
"Rate him not as a mere hunter fierce;
Hearken to his deed which We unfold to you. (805)

157. "His form entire is all love for Us solely;
All his knowledge is Gnosis that truly cons Us;
Every one of his acts is endearing to Us;
Know him to be thus, even thus." Thus He. (806)

158. "I will demonstrate his acts to you; if to-morrow
You watch concealed, you will sure witness
His love and loving-kindness, all for Me;
Be rid of your mental torment." Thus He spake
In grace to the great *muni* and anon
The Lord of matted hair where courses the flood
Took to His form invisible. (807)

159. He woke up from his dream, the great *muni* of *tapas;*
He wouldn't sleep during the rest of the night;
It was his night of mystical tremendum.
At dawn *Aruna* rose up in his car unique
Yoked to a single swift steed. (808)

160. He had his bath in the divine *Mukali*
As on the day before, and he contemplated the grace
Of the lord in multifoliate ways.
He ascended the Hill of *Tiru-k-Kalatthi*
And did his *pooja* to *Pinggnakan* as is his wont
And then stood in hiding, behind the Lord. (809)

161. At the end of night, when day broke
On the sixth day of his servitorship,
Before the arrival of the great *muni* versed in the Gospels,
He, the sleepless bowman like unto a dark nimbus,
Had set out for his hunt unique, as before. (810)

162. Peerless food of flesh, water for holy ablutions
And fresh flowers stuck into his hair
He took with him in ways differing from the known;
He proceeded to the presence of the Lord of *Tiru-k-Kalatthi*
Who sports on His matted hair the river,
And who is the Lord of nectarean wealth to those
Who are with clarified intellect endowed. (811)

163. Before him who deemed himself a cunctator
And moved on swiftly, ill omens auguring illth occurred;
"Ominous portents throng thick to reveal blood-mark;
What hath betid my Father? Woe's me!"
Thus he cried and as he neared Him... (812)

164. The glorious Lord of *Tiru-k-Kalatthi* desiring to
Demonstrate unto the *muni*, the great love
Of *Thinnan*, made one of his beauteous eyne
Bleed with sudden spurts of blood; he, the bowman
That beheld it even at a distance
Came dashing in terrific speed. (813)

165. He beheld the streaming blood; he was bewildered;
The goodly water from his mouth spilled; from his hands
The cup of flesh and the bow, alike slipped down;
The fresh flowers that would burgeon in bunches,
From his tuft trembled and tossed and fell down.
He quaked in agony, and down he fell crashing. (814)

166. He that fell down, rose up and wiped out the blood;
The gush would not cease; he was dazed;
Deep sighs he heaved and again fell down;
Somewhat revived he pondered thus: "Who had done this?"
Up he rose, cast his look in all directions
And seized his bow. (815)

167. Picking out choice darts, he thought aloud:
"Are there hunters, fierce and cruel, and hostile to me,
Who could have done this? Or was it wrought by
Wild beasts like the lion? I know not!"
To the slope of the huge hill, he fared forth
Sleuthing a great stretch. (816)

168. There were no hunters; neither were anywhere
Wild beasts, though he searched for them.
He came back to his deity; gripped by grief
He held fast to the flowery feet of the Lord;
He hugged them close and cried bitterly;
His eyes rained tears. (817)

169. "This sinner beholds a ghastly sight;
What hath happened to the Supreme One?
What hath betid our Father, dearer than life?
What hath befallen the Pure One, from whom
Loving ones will never, never part?
I'm bewildered; what can I do at all?"
Thus he cried and again he spake thus: (818)

170. "What can end this? (I know not.)
I cannot find those who had wrought this evil
To my Lord; I'll go, search and fetch the herbs
From the golden foot-hills, which heal the wounds
Of ankleted hunters, caused by long and shiny darts." (819)

171. His mental eye surveyed the various herbaries
Situate in the dense jungles variform;
Like a red-eyed bull parted from its herd
He darted out in dread, and gathered herbs
And returned with a speed excelling that of his mind
Dedicated to the Lord of the *Bhootas;*
He squeezed the herbs and poured the demulcent juice
Into the bleeding eye. (820)

172. The herbal juice distilled into the eye
Of the Lord of *Tiru-k-Kalatthi*, was of no avail,
Blood continued to stream, as before.
"What shall I, alas, do for this plight?" he thought.
Then he remembered the saying: "Flesh is
By flesh cured." (821)

173. "For this, the remedy is to scoop out my eye
With an arrow and transplant it;
The blood will peradventure cease to flow."
Thus he resolved and rejoicing in his heart
He stood before Him and in joy, gouged
His eye and holding it with care, in his hand
He fixed it in the eye of the First One. (822)

174. The blood ceased to gush forth; up he jumped
In delight great; he stroked his hill-like shoulders,
He danced for joy. "This, my intelligent act
Is great indeed!" So he spake and smiled.
Excessive joy threw him into a fine frenzy. (823)

175. The Lord of *Kalatthi*, the more to demonstrate
The greatness of the munificent devotee
Who grafted his right eye on His right eye,
Made red blood flow ceaselessly from his other eye;
Thinnan who is far superior to all the celestials
And who came to be born by reason
Of the immense askesis of the hunting clan,
Witnessed this. (824)

176. "Woe's me!" he shrieked, and spake thus:
"The blood that streamed from one of the eyes
Of our Lord of *Kalatthi* had ceased to flow;
But blood gushes forth from the other;
I'll not be daunted; I've known of the cure;
I am still left with an eye; I'll scoop it out
And graft it on His and thus cure Him." (825)

177. If he should scoop out his eye to graft it
On the eye of the Lord -- the forehead-eyed --,
He should precisely know where to fix it.
So, he planted his left foot on the divine eye
Of the Lord and when with love inly welling up
Thinnan took out an arrow non-pareil
And applied it to his eye; the Lord of gods
Could endure it no longer. (826)

178. The Rider of the red-eyed, white-hued Bull
-- The merciful Lord, the Ruler of *Thinnan*,
The Marvellous One of *Tiru-k-Kalatthi* --,
Stuck out His hand and stayed his hand
That was about to gouge his eye.
The ambrosial words of the Lord who wears
As jewels the serpents, announced thus thrice:
"Stop! Oh Kannappa!" (827)

179. The great *muni* of wisdom beheld the act
Of the prince of the hunters who gouged his eye
And applied it to that of the Lord's and the act
Of the Lord -- the Relisher of the ambrosial food
Offered to him --, who with His own hand prevented
His hand from scooping out his eye; all the celestials
From *Brahma* onwards showered fresh flowers
Whilst the Vedas great resounded. (828)

180. Can there he a greater beatitude? The Lord
Of the Bull held with His hand the hand of him
Who was to scoop out his eye and graft it
On the Lord's eye when he beheld His injured eye,
And said: "O peerless one! be at My Right for ever!"
Thus, even thus, He graced him. (829)

181. I wear on my head the feet of the lord
Who grafted his eye on that of the Lord's,
Of cloud-capped *Tiru-k-Kalatthi* and thus
Stopped the streaming of blood from His eye,
And proceed to chronicle the divine service
Of *Kalayanar* of excelling fame, who hailed
From Kadavur where the Lord on whose matted hair
Courses the *Ganga*, is enshrined. (830)

Stanza	Line		
5		Tudi	: A little drum, shaped like an hour-glass.
9		Tali	: "Tali n. gold ornament on thread tied round the neck of Hindu bride in Southern India at time of marriage". - Common Indian Words In English, O.U.P., 1984.
13	5	It is the salt-sea which gave birth to the moon, the amrita etc., according to the anonymous commentator of Takkayaka-p-Parani also.	
23	3	Chutti	: An ornament like Feronie're which is a jewel worn on the forehead, suspended by a gold chain or band.
23		The sun and the moon are Siva's eyes. Ere long they are to bleed. The bleeding would be cured by Kannappar by the transplantation of his eye.	

25 Uzhuvai is a cross-beam.

27 2 This was done to avert jettatura.

7 The parva : A hunter boy is taught to wield the bow when he is twelve years old.

32 Mantara and Meru are both mountains. Mantara was used to churn the ocean from which the dreaded venom first emerged. But with Mt. Meru, bent into a bow, Siva smote the three evil, flying-cities of the Asuras. Extirpation of evil is indeed a nectarean deed. So, St.Sekkizhar says, Mt. Meru excelled Mt. Mantara.

The bow made for the occasion was like Mt. Meru. Again it was with this bow, Kannappar was to hunt and procure delicious and toothsome venison and the like to please the palate of Siva.

Raksha : The auspicious protective cord tied round the bow with the chanting of mantras. The ensuing stanza informs us that guts of tigers served as raksha for the hunter.

37 4 Vetchi : Ixora coccinea.

38 Tondaka-drum : The drum of the Kurinji region.

39 Vari-dance : A dance similar to morrice.

Tunankai Dance : A dance akin to the dance of devils.

48 Aritharam gathered from the maw of a special type of deer is musk. Aritharam is also obtained from stones. This is called Manosilai and is inferior to musk. Aritharam also means yellow orpiment.

49 Kamban's Rama is equally solicitous.

57 Kurinji : Strobilanthus.

58 Kunri : Abrus precatorius.

65 Charu : An oblation of rice, pulse, etc., boiled with ghee and milk.

66 Akshata : Rice mixed with turmeric powder and made holy with the chanting of mantras.

71	Adampu	: A running flower-plant.
73	Kalindi	: The river Jamuna.
75	One Yojna	: 3,80,000 inches or 6 miles.

83 Indian mythology has it that the lunar eclipse takes place when the dragon Rakhu (the ascending node) devours the moon. The black shape in the moon, called "The Old man of the Moon" by Westerners, is regarded as an antelope (or hare) by Indians.

The antelope, according to the description of St. Sekkizhar, sensing the approach of the dragon to devour Chandra, slips from it to effect an escape. The dragon will not suffer its escape and pursues it.

92 Katham : "An Indian league, a distance of about ten miles."

- Winslow.

96 Nanan calls the Lord 'Kudumi-th-Thevar'. Kudumi means 'tuft of hair'. It also means 'top'. On the top of the hill is enshrined the Lord.

The last of the Vedas is Atharva. Its end is called Atharva Sikai. Sikai like 'kudumi' means, 'tuft of hair' or 'top'. Atharva Sikai says: "Giving up all, Lord Siva alone -- the Doer of good --, is to be contemplated." Attainment of the feet of the Lord is truly the consummation devoutly to be wished.

100 Chinta : The heart as the seat of affection.

101 Only Thinnan was blessed to hear the celestial instruments which were inaudible to Nannan. His answer is therefore a mere guess.

116	Iguana	: Lacerta iguana.
123	Swayampu	: Self-born.
131	Jyoti Vriksha	: This is supposed to flourish in the interior woodland and is considered divine. During day time it is like any other tree. It begins to coruscate after dusk. Mention is also made of Jyoti grass and Jyoti liana in literature. Tiru Philo Hrudayanath has seen a tree of this genre.

138 5 The foot-prints of a dog : They were those of Kannappar's hunting dog's. The inseparable companion of the bowman, had obviously followed Kannappar. Poet Nakkirar has recorded this event in his divine poem, "Tiru Kannappa-th-Tevar Tiru Maram".

– Eleventh Tirumurai.

141 The hunting of Nayanar is no wanton destruction of wild-life. It was out and out holy and divine. Its sole purpose was to secure an offering to the supreme Lord. Even to chronicle the hunting is a beatitude.

142 The hunting done by Kannappar was truly the performance of a holy sacrifice. The animals which served as offerings truly gained the eternal beatitude.

144 Arani sticks : Sticks for churning out fire.

147 Oblations are thrown into the fire-pit of a sacrifice. The fire-pit is symbolic of Lord Agni, the god of Fire. He carries them to the gods.

Five stanzas after stanza 157 which are included in several editions of the Periyapuranam, are omitted here, as they are interpolations, according to Sivakkavimani C.K.Subramania Mudaliar whose text is followed in this edition.

159 Aruna is the charioteer of the Sun-god. The car is single-wheeled and is drawn by a single steed. Some say it is drawn by a team of seven steeds.

160 Pinggnakan : Lord Siva decked with the ornament pinggnakam on His hair. Some say that the hair woven into a crown, is pinggnakam.

6 Sivakkavi says that according to Mazhavai Mahalinga Iyer, Sivagochariar concealed himself behind the cluster of trees that grew behind the Lord's idol.

162 3 This has reference to the atypical ways of the great devotee.

16. The Puranam Of Kungkuliya-k-Kalaya Nayanar

"I am a servitor of the servitors of Kalayan of Kadavur"

-The *Tiru-th-Tonda-th-Tokai.*

1. In the *Chola* land that thrives with foison enriched
By the waters of the *Cauvery,* there's a fortressed town
Where could abide Brahmins, great in Vedic glory;
It is prosperous *Kadavur* where is enshrined the Lord
Whose matted hair sports the billowy *Ganga*
And who, of yore, smote *Yama* with His roseate foot,
That came to take away the life of a devotee. (831)

2. In fecund *Thiru-k-Kadavur* the fields are rich in paddy;
Their ridges are full of chanks and their pearls;
On all sides flourish halls of sacrifice;
Its waters are rich in clusters of red lilies;
On the tops of areca groves, clouds rest;
People tend them with loving care; there the Brahmins
Perform nought but their sextuple duty. (832)

3. Songs in *maruda* tune are sung in the places
Where dance the farmwives whose eyes, broad as
The palm of hand, are touched with collyrium;
In all places where Brahmins -- the wearers
Of threefold sacred thread --, perform rituals
Hymns of the *Sama Veda* are chanted. (833)

4. As milk that drips from the udders of huge, long-horned buffaloes
That lie immersed in the tanks, is splashed
By the ruddy carps that leap and dart thither,
Lotuses smell of milk sweet; the clouds
That move on, come near the towered halls
Of sacrifice; the showers that fall from them
Are tinct with the odour of sacrificial smoke. (834)

5. In that wealthy town where abides *Lakshmi*,
A Brahmin versed in the Gospels -- the wearer
Of the threefold sacred thread --, by name *Kalayar* lived.
He would daily hail the ankleted feet of the Lord
Who sports on His matted hair the great river;
His heart ever melted in devotion, and he was virtuous. (835)

6. When the Brahmin lad held fast to Him, He who is not
To be beheld by *Vishnu* and *Brahma*,
To annihilate the dread of the lad and grace him,
Took a form, and kicked Death to death;
To this Lord, *Kalayar* rendered the service
Of holy fumigation of *kungkuliyam* in abundant measure;
He was firm stablished in this service. (836)

7. To the Lord in whose matted hair the *Ganga* courses gurgling
-- The Lord who sports an eye in His forehead --,
He rendered unfailingly the service of fumigation
And from his censer rose spiralling clouds of holy smoke.
Even when the Lord in His grace made him indigent
He failed not in this service to his Lord. (837)

8. As he was thus poised in his service, acute became
His chill penury; he sold all his lands and also
All his serfs and slaves who willingly served him;
His manifold wealth was total lost; his kith and kin
And his children too were sunk in domestic misery. (838)

9. There was nothing left in his house; two days
Passed without their having any food;
Grieving for the plight of the sorrowing children
And the great kin, his beloved wife removed
Her flawless *tali* from the auspicious cord and gave it
To her husband saying: "Get paddy for this." (839)

10. *He received it and moved out to buy paddy;*
On his way a vendor of *kungkuliyam* came in front of him;
He asked him: "What do you carry in the bundle?"
The vendor truly told him what it contained;
Then the wearer of the threefold sacred thread
Spake thus with a beaming face: (840)

11. "If this be fragrant *Kungkuliyam* fit to be used
In the *pooja* of the Lord whose ruddy hair sports the river,
Can I bargain for a better boon? Having come by
The well-nigh impossible boon, what else is there
For me to secure?" Thus he mused in love. (841)

12. *"Give it to me; I'll give you gold." When he spake thus,*
The hawker asked him: "What would you consent to give?"
Kalayanar gave him the *tali;* he received it
And passed on the bundle to him; he tarried not
But walked away swift with a heart full of delight. (842)

13. To *Veerattanam* where abides the Rider of the Bull,
He fared forth in speed, and deposited the package
In the promptuary of the temple; in soaring love
Which was oblivious of all other things, he stood
Hailing the flower-feet of the One of matted hair. (843)

14. While the devotee was at the temple, by the grace
Of the Lord, the Ruler of *Alakapuri* brought down
His wealth to the earth and filled his house
With heaps of gold, paddy and other grains also;
Interminable was the foison and ever-abiding. (844)

15. His wife and children grieved in excessive hunger
And slumbered fast that night; unto the sleeping wife,
Verily a liana-like *tapaswini,* the Lord
Through her dream conveyed the happening;
She woke up and beheld the wealth, and her mind
Gratefully dwelt on the gift of the Lord. (845)

16. As she who was in form a tender twig
Witnessed the endless heaps of beauteous gold,
Paddy, rice and the like, she lifted her hands
Above her head and folded them thinking of the Lord's grace.
Then she went into the kitchen to cook food
For her husband great. (846)

17. The Lord who with His roseate foot kicked to death *Yama*,
Instructed *Kalayanar*, absorbed in devotion deep,
Thus: "You are very hungry; repair
To your great mansion and thither partake of
Toothsome rice mixed with milk, and be rid of your misery." (847)

18. As *Kalayanar* heard this, his hands folded in adoration;
He durst not disobey the gracious fiat of the Lord
Who sports on His matted hair the *Ganga;*
He wore it, as it were, on his head, and came out
Of the temple, passed through the street dight with
Hill-like mansions, and reached his house. (848)

19. He entered his house and beheld the huge heaps
Of wealth; addressing his wife, he spoke thus:
"Dear one whose brow is a bow, how came these to be?"
She said: "By the grace of the Lord whose throat is
Dark as night, these are here." (849)

20. When the lady of the house whose gait was a flash of lightning,
Spake thus, glorious *Kalayanar* looking at the splendour
Of the great riches -- the wealth immense and ever-during --,
Said: "Even me He rules, my Father, my Lord, my God!
Behold the grace of Grace!" This said, he lifted his hands
Above his head and folded them in adoration. (850)

21. She who is even greater than Sri enthroned on lotus
Made ready the plantain leaves to serve food;
Anon she invited her husband and the devotees of the Lord
Who sports an eye in His forehead; she duly
Hailed them all with *dipa*-worship, and fed them
Sumptuously; *Kalayanar* well-versed in the Gospels
Ate well, and was filled with joy. (851)

22. By the grace of the Lord who goes from place to place
With a begging-bowl, he was stablished on earth
In wealth immense; he feasted the devotees
Of the Lord with sumptuous food and healthy dishes
Of vegetables, curds, ghee and milk. Thus he throve. (852)

23. The king of the realm impelled by love excessive
Desired to set right the slanting image of the Lord
-- The beauteous-eyed Rider of the angry-eyed,
White-hued Bull --; he fastened to the image
A team of tuskers to pull it into position;
Yet the image stood slanting as ever.
So was he sunk in sad despair at all times. (853)

24. *Kalayanar* who is poised in the righteous path of piety,
Heard of the king's misery who was burning with a penchant
To adore the Lord in his erect form; moved by his love
He set out to adore the Lord-Enchanter
Whose matted hair dazzles like clustered lightnings. (854)

25. On his way he visited all the beauteous temples
Where abides the Lord whose roseate hand holds the *mazhu*,
And hailed Him; thus he reached *Tiruppanantal*
-- Cinctured with fecund and flowery gardens --,
Where abide the hoary Brahmin clan versed in the *Vedas*,
Who swerve not from their path of piety
And who tend the triple fire for the world to thrive. (855)

26. He beheld the love-bred sorrow of the monarch;
Maugre the great effort of the tuskers
And the flawless army, their labour divine
Bore no fruit; fatigued, the monarch
Fell on earth and languished sore;
Kalayar, the great *tapaswi*, was pained at heart. (856)

27. Witnessing the fallen tuskers and the army
That could not rise up, he thought thus:
"I too must share their service and languishment."
He fastened to his neck the strong and flowery rope
Tethered to the frame divine of the Lord
Who wears on His crest melliferous *konrai*,
And began to tug with effort great. (857)

28. Can the image stand slanting, defying his wish
Even after the firm-fibred servitor tugged it
With the rope wrought of the threads of integral love?
The very moment the Lord beheld the integer
Of *Kalayanar's* resolute love, He stood straight.
The celestials clamoured in the heaven, for joy. (858)

29. The earth was thick with the showered *Karpaka* flowers;
The king's army, heroes that plied the cars and the tuskers
Were happy like thirsty gardens at the advent of rain;
The king that wore the heroic anklet folded his hands
And adored the servitor; he fell at his feet
And his crown rested on his flower-feet. (859)

30. "You made it possible for me to hail the erect form
Of the Lord who riding His car of the *Vedas* and holding
The hill of *Meru* bent into a bow fierce
Gutted with fire the triple cities that winged in the sky.
Who but devotees poised in piety and love, can ever
Behold the flower-feet twain of the Lord, invisible
Even to him who burrowed deep the earth? (860)

31. Thus hailed the king the true servitor;
He rendered many a fitting service to the Lord
And then, he of the abiding white parasol
To his city fared forth; the peerless devotee
Hailed the ankleted flower-feet of the Lord
That dance in the *Ambalam*, and thither sojourned. (861)

32. A few days passed and he left for *Tiruk-k-Kadavur*
And there was he poised in his abiding service hallowed;
Thither came the peerless Lord of *Seerkazhi* non-pareil
-- The Godly Son --, together with the wondrous Bard
Of *Thandaka* hymns -- *Tirunavukkarasar*
Of universal renown. (862)

33. In joy unique welling up in him, them he welcomed
And into his mansion divine, received.
He feasted them with food of sextuple taste
And received not only their grace divine, but that of
The Lord who wears fragrant and beauteous *Konrai*, also. (863)

34. In *Tiru-k-Kadavur* where is enshrined the Lord, who
Smote the wielder of the sugarcane-bow and *Yama*,
In devotion fed by love -- ever-swelling and willing --,
And with his soul that had gained at-one-ment,
He rendered manifold service divine
And reached the shade of Lord Siva's feet. (864)

35. He gave away the auspicious *tali* of her,
-- The wearer of honey-laden wreath --,
And secured *kungkuliya* that his service
To the Lord who wears a curved crescent
Might suffer no break; he is *Kalayanar*
Of well-established character; I hail him,
And with his grace, I begin to hail
Manakkancharar of renowned munificence. (865)

Stanza	Line		
1		Yama	: God of death.

1	7	A devotee	: Markandeya.
2	2	Kazhuneer	: Red-lilies, Nymphaea rubra.
2	7	Sextuple duty	: Learning, instructing, performing sacrifice or cause the performance of such sacrifice, receiving and gifting.
6		The Brahmin lad	: Markandeya.
6		Fumigation	: Pukaikaattal, Narumpukai oottuthal, Thupavarkkam kaattuthal. - Winslow's English-Tamil Dictionary.
		Kungkuliyam	: Resinous gum used as holy incense.
13		Veerattanam	: The place where the Lord enacted a heroic deed. They are eight in number and Kadavur is one of them.
14		The Ruler of Alakapuri	: Kubera, the God of wealth. He is also hailed as the Companion of the Lord.
17		*The instruction was by "asariri", the unbodied voice.*	
21	1	Sri-Lakshmi, the Goddess of Wealth and Beauty.	
	5	Dipa-worship	: Part of Maheswara Pooja. Maheswaras are devotees who had received initiation (diksha). Feasting them is the chief part of Maheswara-Pooja. Before feeding them, the host adores them almost in the same way in which Lord Siva is hailed. Unto them are done the rites of twirling the platter which holds the lighted lamp, holy fumigation etc., in utmost devotion. Sivakkavi says that the uninitiated are not to be called Maheswaras. Such devotees also should be fed. The feeding here is known as 'Anna-dhana'. This will earn for the performer 'pasu-punya'. Maheswara-Pooja rewards the doer with 'pati-punya'.
22	1&2	The Lord is a great mendicant. He holds in His hand a skull as a begging-bowl. We are expected to fill His bowl with our love and devotion.	
24	4	He set out	: Sivakkavi says that with a view to adore the Lord of Tiruppanantal, Kalayanar came to the shrine of Kadavur to take leave of the presiding deity of Kadavur.

27	4	The strong and flowery rope	: So as not to cause harm in the least, the strong rope was dressed with flowers and soft silken cloth.
34	6	P.Jothimuthu rightly says: "The expression: 'the shade of the feet' means the grace of god." Ainkurunuru, C.L.S. (1984) page 1. cf." Avan arulale Avan thaall vanangki".	

-The Tiruvachakam.

17. The Puranam Of Manakkancharar

"I am a servitor to the servitors of the munificient lord,
Manakkancharar endowed with hill-like shoulders."

\- The *Tiru-th-Tonda-th-Tokai.*

1\. Down the branches flows honey (from bee-hives);
From fruitage rich and ripe, oozes juice and runs a stream;
From fields flows the juice of sweet-canes and merges
With the river making it fragrant; such is *Kanjaroor* --
Where abides willingly the Lord who sports
On His crimson crest the celestial *Ganga* --,
Hailed for its renown by bards
Who have conned the true way from great texts. (866)

2\. Escaping the weeding done by farmwives
Whose eyes are like lilies blue,
And well fed with rich water
The red *lilies* burgeon rubicund;
Before these soft water-blooms
The long sheaves of paddy bow their heads;
Such are the fields there, rich in soil and water. (867)

3\. On the napes of their necks cascade their *koontals*
Which are black like rain-clouds; their hips sway
And their soft mien is like that of the pea-fowl;
Thus throng thither the farmwives whose visages
Excel the full moon whose beauty is marred by
The dark hare-like shape; in pools and ponds thither,
Sport strong carps which are like their eyes;
The vast fields of *Kanjaroor* are full of paddy sheaves. (868)

4. The paddy sheaves that grow in the cool miry fields
Reach the green necks of areca trees that grow thick
By the fence, and circle their fruit-bunches;
Thus they resemble the curved sickles of farmers. (869)

5. The town is girt with forted walls inlaid with
Bright multicoloured stones; in platforms and pavilions
Waft streamers; thither could be eyed lovely lasses;
There are on the way, places that would the senses enchant;
Festoons and water-filled pots deck the town. (870)

6. Thither danced jewelled damsels, whose mien rivalled
That of pea-fowls, and *mridangams* resounded
In unison with their steps; thus the streets of the town
Were full of festivity; its residents were prosperous men,
Householders of rectitude who pursued husbandry and *dharma*. (871)

7. For the thriving of the family that from generation
To generation holds the office of the King's General,
He made his holy *avatar;* he had contemplated
And come by the True Ens; he was the treasure unfailing
Of the *Velala*-clan; lofty and sublime was he;
He was called *Manakkancharar.* (872)

8. Humility was his form; he was blessed with the beatitude
-- And it never suffered any diminution --,
Of servitorship to the Lord whose matted hair
Is adorned with the adder and the crescent cool.
His duty was to render all service to the resolute devotees
That were solely devoted to the feet of the Lord. (873)

9. He prospered in peerless wealth, and such wealth
Was by him ear-marked for the ever-blessed devotees
Of the Lord-Brahmin in whose matted hair the *Ganga* flows;
Before even they would express their wish he would
Divine it already and ply them with gifts. (874)

10. Thus he throve on this earth girt with the ocean-stream,
As a lamp unto all the world;
For some years no child was born to him who knew not
Of the ignorance of the Lord's feet unknown to *Vishnu;*
He prayed to God for the gift of a child, prompted by Grace. (875)

11. By the grace of the Dancing Lord from whose ears
Dangle ear-rings, his wife who could command
Even the descent of rain, bore him a daughter
Who could deliver them from the fettering cycle
Of birth and death bred by deeds. (876)

12. The hoary town swam in the joy generated by
The birth of the child; auspicious organs resounded;
Those that stood poised in the way of the Lord of gods
Were loaded with gifts; the nurses blessed their ward,
And she grew like an auric liana. (877)

13. The babe crossed the tender *parva* of *kappu;*
The soft curly hair of the babe was decked with
Pretty little flowers buzzed over by bees;
Her locks and ear-rings of gold dangled together;
A bijou girdle of gems cinctured her slender waist;
She was dressed in a little skirt, and as she plied
Her tender feet soft as small shoot,
Her *kinnkini* chimed and her skirt rustled. (878)

14. She was in the midst of nurses whose fostering hands
Were soft like flowers; she played in the courtyard
Of the house, building beauteous toy-houses of sand;
She played *kazhal* and other games to the tinkling
Of her anklets filled with grains of gems;
Thus the ambrosial child reached the first *parva*
Of girlhood when tender breasts began to bud. (879)

15. (Years rolled by.) Her form external blazed with lustre;
Her waist languished under the big burden of her breasts;
Her teeth were fragrant buds and her smile was pearly.
Cool were her locks; now became nubile the girl
Who hailed from the flawless family. (880)

16. She excelled *Lakshmi;* she was like a lamp of ruby;
Aged men of wisdom came there seeking her peerless hand
For *Yeyarkon* of heroic anklet -- a servitor of the Lord who is
The blue throated Brahmin --,
Who hailed from the *Velala*-clan and family of equal renown. (881)

17. *Manakkancharar* in the fitting way traditional
Received them; he heard their proposal for marriage
And said: "This is in keeping with our clan's way."
Thus he gladly consented and gave them leave to depart. (882)

18. They returned and conveyed *Kancharar's* consent;
Yeyarkon of hill-like shoulders grew glad;
Wise men versed in astrology fixed the day for matrimony
Befitting the families of both. (883)

19. The father of the bride, a prince of patrons,
Gladly engaged himself in auspicious acts;
To the great delight of his vast kith and kin
He reared *palikais* in rows of beauteous wares;
The hoary town dight with melliferous gardens
Was duly decorated for the connubium. (884)

20. *Kancharar* was to give his daughter in wedding
And *Kalikkamar* of boundless glory, the chief
Of the *Yeyar* family was to hold her hand with his,
In solemn acceptance; for this, with his kith and kin
Thronging thick to the accompaniment
Of musical instruments he proceeded to and neared
Kancharoor girt with flowery gardens cloud-capped. (885)

21. Before even the wedding party neared *Kancharoor*,
To the house of the father of the bride of flowery eyes
Decked with bright jewels, through a peerless way
Came He, the Lord of gods that ever abode
In the heart of *Kancharar*, that the redemption
Of the earth girt with billowy seas, may meet with fruition. (886)

22. Triple stripes of the Holy Ash flashed from His forehead;
The tuft on His tonsured head was decked with
A wreath of bone-beads; His ears bore dangling *kundala*
Wrought of pearls very like the ones carved out
Of the skeleton of the one whom He bore. (887)

23. He wore a long dangling chain of bright-beads
Of that bone; instead of the fierce serpent whose mouth
Holds sacs of venom, He wore a band on His shoulders;
For his sacred thread He wore a thread of human hair;
He also had a pouch of the Holy Ash that could end
The cycle of birth and death of pure-hearted devotees. (888)

24. He wore on one wrist a thread which held a bone-bead;
Over His *Kovanam* woven of the rare Gospels, He wore
A fitting and beauteous garment; His ineffable feet
Did touch the earth and on the soles thereof, were (visible)
The divine pentad of signs. (889)

25. His frame divine was smeared thick with the Holy Ash;
It was like unto ashes veiling the burning fire within;
Passing through the streets where streamers wafted
He entered the house divine of *Manakkancharar*
Whose heart enshrines His cool lotus-feet divine. **(890)**

26. He beheld the *Mavrita Muni* who arrived thus;
The great servitor, in delight great, moved to his presence
And with a mind with joy surcharged, said:
"I stand redeemed by your coming, who are verily
My Lord-Father of askesis." With a mind
Melting in love, he bowed before Him. **(891)**

27. The Lord of great askesis addressing the goodly devotee
Questioned him thus: "What auspicious function
Here takes place?" Him he replied thus: "The wedding
Of my only daughter is to take place here."
Then the *tapaswi* great blessed him thus:
"May auspicious weal attend thee." **(892)**

28. He prostrated at the feet of Him whose form
Was that of Gnosis as well as *Tapas*, and went into the house;
Manakkancharar returned with her whose *koontal*
Was decked with honey-laden flowers and who shone
In bridal splendour; he caused her bow before Him
That stood there concealing His blue throat. **(893)**

29. He looked at the flowery *koontal* which was
Dark and dense like the rain-cloud, of her
Who bowed at His feet and rose up;
Addressing the adoring servitor He said:
"The hair of this beauteous belle can serve Us as
Panchavati." Thus spake He, the bestower of grace to devotees. **(894)**

30. The moment He spake thus, he unsheathed from
His scabbard the sword, and thought thus:
"I am indeed truly endowed", and sheared away
From its base the hair -- dark as night --,
Of his flowery daughter, and extended it into
The flowery hands of Him who stood before him
And who is the breaker of the cycle of transmigration. (895)

31. He, the God of the Gospels who stood there as if
He would receive it, anon disappeared.
He reappeared in the heavens, with His Consort
On His Mount, the ancient Bull, ever-young.
Earth and sky were mantled with a shower
Of beauteous *Karpaka* flowers; the servitor
Adored and prostrated before the divine presence. (896)

32. When the tranced servitor true, rose up, the Lord-Dancer
In whose crest floats the crescent as if tossed by
The billows of the *Ganga*, spake thus: "We have caused
The flourishing worlds to know of the love that soars
In you for Us." Then He graced Him. (897)

33. *Manakkancharar* was blessed with the beatitude
To hail the Lord, with hands folded above his head
In adoration with at-one-ment; he could thus
Adore the Lord enthroned on His mount, the Bull,
And hailed close by, by *Gananatas* and thronging gods. (898)

34. Thus gracing the devotee and hailed by the celestials,
The Lord-God, the wearer of chaplet, grew invisible.
To hold her hand in wedding, the liana-like bride
Whose fragrant *koontal* is buzzed over by bees,
And delighting the eyes of the wedding-guests
Thither came *Yeyarkon Kalikkamar*. (899)

35. The prince of *Yeyar* clan heard from them
That had gathered thither of the inconceivable phenomenon
And grew mighty glad;
He hailed the gracious act of the Lord and grew sad;
He heard of the Lord's blessing (900)

36. And was cured of his languishment; he wedded her,
The liana-like, whose *koontal* grew with flowers and all
As before by the grace of the God of the celestials;
He gifted great sums of money to all, causing
The glory of the wedding to spread throughout the world;
With his vast kin, he hied back to his hoary forted town. (901)

37. Does it lie in my power to indite his glory
Who gifted the *koontal* of his only daughter peerless
On the very day of her wedding to the One (supreme)?
I now proceed to narrate the glory of him who was
Blessed to hear the sound of the biting by the Lord
Of tender mango that slipped into the fissure in a field. (902)

Stanza	Line		
3		Koontal	: (Skt. Kuntala), "Anything long and flowing in detached parts -- as tresses, braids, etc., of women's hair." - Winslow.
5	5	Festoons and water-filled pots are signs of auspicious prosperity.	
10	3-4	Knew not of the ignorance: ever aware of and never unaware of.	
11	2&3	cf. "No god adoring, low she bends before her lord; Then rising, serves: the rain falls instant at her word." - Kural 55.	
13		Parva of Kappu	: This period commences at the end of the second month of the child.
	6-8	Refer to the period when the child ceases to toddle and begins to walk gently.	
14	7	This period of life is called 'petai-parva'. The girl is now seven years old.	
22		Kundala	: Dangling ear-ornament(s). At the grand Dissolution of the Cosmos, worlds and all are resolved into Maya, Maya into Sakti and Sakti into Siva. The Lord alone remains. In His unqiue aloneness, He is described as Gangaalar, the One decked with the skeletons, of Vishnu and Brahma.
	5	The one	: Vishnu.
24	5	The whorls on the soles of feet bore the marks of lotus, chank, fish, disc and staff.	
29		Panchavati	: The sacred thread woven of hair.
30	3	Endowed	: Endowed with rare wealth.

18. The Puranam of Arivattaya Nayanar

"I am a servitor to the servitors of Vattayan
Who desired to perish when his service failed."

The *Tiru-th-Tonda-th-Tokai.*

1. And there is a town called *Kanamangalam*,
A splendid place for dwelling, enriched by
The flood of the Cauvery; here hum honey-bees,
Male and female, and soft nodes of sweetcanes
Burst and seep out a rich saccharic ooze. (903)

2. In its paddy-fields when the farmers
Weed out lotuses from them, fall down pearls
Bred thither by chanks; the farm-hands thus,
Like the celestials, look endowed with *Padma-Nidhi*. (904)

3. In that town of foison, in the visages of damsels
Whose *koontals* display fivefold plaits, bees buzz;
Their eyes like unto blue lilies roll and reach their ears;
Their necks are decked with jewels of blue gems;
In pools beside the fields where sport the finny drove
Nelumbos rich in leafy wealth burgeon. (905)

4. In that town was a great householder,
Righteous, proper and honourable;
With immense wealth ancestral was he endowed;
He was the chief of husbandmen. (906)

5. *Tayanar* was the name he bore.
Though for a long time, *Vishnu* pursued
Burrowing, he could not find and was bewildered;
But to those feet of *tapas*, he could hold fast. (907)

6. For the Lord-Brahmin of ruddy matted hair
Which flashes like lightning, he daily offered
Food of rice, lush greens well-cooked
And condiment savoury of tender mangoes. (908)

7. To behold him pursue this service willingly
Indigence notwithstanding, and approve it in joy
The Lord of the hoary Gospels caused the traceless
Disappearance of his ancestral wealth. (909)

8. His wealth became like unto the wood-apple
Attacked by *Vezham*, and perished;
Yet in love he adored *Ammai-Appar* as before;
Tayanar swerved not from his flawless service. (910)

9. In chill penury, as a harvesting coolie
He earned by way of wages goodly paddy;
With that, he provided in love
His nectarean offerings for the Lord. (911)

10. He would go from place to place in search of employers,
Get paddy and use it up all, to provide
Ambrosial offerings divine; while thus he throve,
One day the Lord who is unknown to *Vishnu*,
Chose to change the course of events. (912)

11. In all the fields the Lord caused growth of crops
Rich in paddy sheaves that could be daily harvested;
Beholding this the glorious *Tayanar* thought thus:
"This indeed is my *punya*." He felt happy
And he engaged himself in harvesting; with the paddy
Thus secured, he rendered rich service to his deity. (913)

12. Though for many days they had no rice to eat
His wife suffered no loss of love for the Lord;
She would from the backyard daily gather wild greens
Cook and serve it; they had only this for food;
Thus they spent their days, though their service
Continued as usual. (914)

13. When even the wild greens were unavailable
His wife, verily an *Aruntati*, served him with water;
With that for his food, the loving devotee pursued
His daily service; I am truly blessed to narrate
What took place one day, when he spent his days thus. (915)

14. When as before to provide offerings for the Lord
The servitor bore on his head the basket
That contained the goodly rice, pure as his spiralling love,
The tender greens and the tender mangoes, and fared forth
With a mind untouched by trouble, his wife followed him
With the pot of *panchakavya*. (916)

15. As he was proceeding thus, by reason of his fatigue
His foot slipped; with her hand that covered
The earthen pot, his loving wife tried to hold him;
Yet as all slipped into the fissure of the field,
The servitor of the Lord of the *Bhootas* exclaimed:
"Of what avail is my going there, henceforth?" (917)

16. When goodly greens, tender mangoes pure and rice spilled,
He said: "I am denied the grace of the Lord
Who can rid me of my misery, and rule me,
As I, the one of endless evil,
Canst not offer food to my Lord."
He set the sickle on his neck and began to saw it. (918)

17. "My Lord who could redeem me, could not eat my offering"
He cried, and holding the sickle set on his neck,
He, poised in the flawless way of love, began to saw away
The neck from behind through bone, cord and pipe.
He was like him who would cut away his transmigration. (919)

18. To prevent the act of the fierce and flawless hand
Of the blemishless servitor who wielded the sawing sickle,
The sticking out of the Gracious hand of the Dancer-Lord
And the sound of *Videl-Videl* of biting
And cracking the tender mango, was seen and heard
Simultaneously from the fissure. (920)

19. When the divine hand held the strong hand that wielded
The sickle, he was seized with inopinate wonder;
His wound healed
And he stayed his fierce act;
Great was his joy;
He thought of the grace great of His Lord
And folded His hands in worship;
He stood (in awe) and adored Him thus: (921)

20. "O Supreme Ens, You beheld my nescience, and yet
Wouid approve my servitorship; so were You pleased
To feast on my offering from the fissure; praise be!
O flame pure and good who is concorporate with Her
Whose waist is *tudi*-like, praise be!
O Ancient One of matted hair whose frame of coral hue
Is besmeared with the Holy Ash, praise be!" (922)

21. When he thus hailed Him, He appeared on His Bull
And said: "Great indeed is your deed; with her
Of fair brow, may you for ever abide in Our world!"
With them following Him, the Lord-Dancer of the *Ambalam*
Moved away on His mount, the Bull ever-young. (923)

22. As the devotee of loving chinta felt that the Supreme Ens
-- The Great One --, could not be by him fed,
And as he set his sickle on his tough neck and began
To saw it, before he could hearken to the cracking sound
Of *videl* of the tender mango (from the fissure),
He came to be called by the holy name *Arivattayar.* (924)

23. I hail and bless the feet of the servitor
Who heard the Lord's biting sound of tender mango
From the fissure of the field into which slipped
His offering of rice, and whence the Lord consumed it.
I now proceed to indite the service of *Anayar*
Of ever-abiding glory as is known to me. (925)

Stanza	Line		
2		Padma-Nidhi	: A lotus shaped "Horn of plenty."
8		Vezham	: A disease attacking wood-apples. The fruit in this condition, would retain its outward form while its contents waste away.
12	1	No rice to eat	: Paddy obtained by way of wages, belonged to the samba category, and was, in entirety, offered to Siva.
14		Panchakavya	: This is compounded of cow's milk, curds, ghee, urine and dung, and is used in the sacred ablutions of the Lord. The comments of the not-so-pure, about this concoction, are to be totally ignored by a true devotee. There is nothing profane in Nature. Filth has its being only in a filthy mind.
17	4	Bone	: Vertebra.
		Cord	: Spinal Cord: the downward extension of the brain.
		Pipe	: Trachea: the wind-pipe.
	5	Transmigration	: The cycle of birth and death.

19. The Puranam of Anaya Nayanar

"I am a servitor of Anayar of Mangkai
On the banks of the billowy river."

The *Tiru-th-Tonda-th-Tokai.*

1. Upper *Mazhanadu* is a land rich in water;
Over its girding gardens fragrant, floats the moon;
From fields where buffaloes are plied in circles
Over threshed sheaves of paddy, bees crawl to ridges;
Over piled-up hay-ricks clouds ascend fatigued;
The land is blessed with enduring wealth. (926)

2. On the dark well-oiled locks of the fair-hipped farmwives
Who are garmented in folds of tucked sarees,
The soft-winged bees and beetles slumber;
On the petalled lotuses fragrant, long carps sleep;
In the fragrant shades of the cool mango-groves
Sleep dark buffaloes. (927)

3. Noise issues when farmers circling ply
The pair of rods of the sugarcane-press;
As smoke from ovens where cane juice is heated,
Spreads near the cool fields where swans teem,
As coom, the wine-presses cause cloud-formations. (928)

4. The chanks shored up by long billowy river
Crawl and ascend the clusters of long-leaved plantains;
They move along the creepers circling the green leaves
Of plantains, and reach the tops of areca trees;
Thence they pour their pearls which fall down
Like flowers from spathes. (929)

5. Near fields where thrive petalled flowers, is a stretch
Of *Mullai* land; thither a new-born calf
Of a young cow romps and jumps midst trees and plants,
And anon joins the herd of deer in the nearby garden
And there in joy jumps and leaps with them.
Such commodious tracks mark this land. (930)

6. The bees that rest on cool blooms of jasmine
White as teeth, are about to pass on to dark lilies
Which are like eyes; the storks that had perched on
The beauteous and rich branches of *Kaya* tree
Are about to dart at the carps that leap from
The fields thick with huge paddy crops. (931)

7. There the bees wing through the clefts of trees in gardens;
Upper *Mazhanadu* is warmed by the rays of sun;
It is like a rare jewel unto this earth;
Thither flourishes the hoary town *Tirumangkalam*
As an auspicious town of foison. (932)

8. Thither thrive from the hoary past peerless clans
Thanks to which righteous wealth manifold abides
There forever; lofty and exemplary is its greatness;
From that glorious town hailed *Anayar*
From the ever-glorious clan of neatherds. (933)

9. He made his *avatar* to make resplendent
The clan of cowherds; he was a great servitor
Of the pure-rayed holy ash; by word,
Thought poised in truth, and deed, he would hail
Nought but the Lord's feet, who dances with
His host of ghosts. (934)

10. He drove the herds of kine afield to *Mullai* tract;
Them he always protected from wild beasts and maladies;
He grazed them in pure, toothsome and soft pasture
And caused them drink avidly sweet potable water;
Thus he tended them in love, and caused them
To increase and multiply flawlessly. (935)

11. Calves and young cows which have ceased to lactate,
Milch cows, gravid cows whose heads have
Soft, silken and sparse growth of hair,
Cows which have recently brought forth their young
And victorious bulls: these were all reared
In their respective mangers innumerable. (936)

12. *Anayar* the great protector of the clan of cowherds
Fostered the cattle thus, that they might increase;
The neatherds obeyed him and honoured his words.
As he thus throve, he took to the playing of flute
Whose music was linked in love
To the divine feet of his Lord. (937)

13. Removing two parts on top and four at bottom
A stem of bamboo had to be prepared; it should be
From out of a live bamboo that hath all the marks
Pronounced in the scriptures of Music;
The hole for blowing wind must first be made;
Then the holes for the seven notes will have to be carved
With an interspace of one inch between two holes. (938)

14. In the flute thus wrought, he played the *Panchakshara*
Of the Lord in tuneful melody married to
The harmony of the seven notes of music;
Entia animate and inanimate were ineluctably
Riveted to his nectarean flow of music,
Meltingly merciful and all-absorbing;
Thus, even thus, he flourished. (939)

15. One day, he decked himself (as usual) with
A wreath of fragrant flowers; his shiny hair
Was brushed neatly and gathered on his right crest
And was tied into a knot; on this he wore a chaplet;
A cord of soft-leaved and green creeper decked with
Naruvili flowers ran binding it; a cord
Dight with coins of gold was fastened on his tuft of hair. (940)

16. He rolled the white *kantal* into which the petals
Of green-leaved and fragrant red *kantal* were inserted,
And these he wore on his dangling ear-lobes dazzling;
On his beauteous and firm-set forehead he wore
The holy ashes whose lustre enchanted the beholders;
His body too was with them richly besmeared. (941)

17. On his chest fully smeared with the holy ash
A garland thick with the flowers of *mullai*, dangled;
From the blooms of garlands worn on his shoulders strong
Bees buzzed causing the buds to burgeon sweet.
He wore on his waist a garment of the bark of trees
Over which an upper garment, silk-soft,
And woven of leaves, fluttered. (942)

18. He wore slippers of leather on his rubicund feet;
His roseate hand held a white staff and a flute
Of melodic harmony; he was encircled by
Strong cow-herds -- watchers of the folds --,
And herds of cows and calves; thus *Anayar*,
The protector of kine, fared forth, wearing wreaths
Whence burgeoned blooms woven into them. (943)

19. To the calling of peacocks, to the singing of *mullai-p-pann*
By bees on the serried rows of creepers, to the inviting smile
Of white *mullai buds from lips of ruddy kopa*,
And the swaying of the lightning-like waist
And the breasts that are like unto the encircling eventide,
Came Time, the Danseuse, to the grand theatre of vast earth,
To dance. (944)

20. To the hailing of neatherds who held their crooks
And drove afield the cows on all sides, came *Anayar*,
The chief of cowherds, to the cool pasture land;
The bees that had in joy sipped nectar from the flowers
Of *the low branches thither, wheeled their flights*
Round and round the rich *konrai* tree; he came near unto it. (945)

21. *Anayar* who came thither cast *his eyes straight*
On the *konrai* tree whose clustered flowers looked like
Fragrant garlands woven of hand; the sweet bunches
Of blooms swayed in the wind; it was like the Lord
With His flowing matted hair; his mind melted;
With his *chinta* oned with the Lord, he unbarred
The flood gates of his love. (946)

22. It has its being in love; anon it spirals, and nectarean
Gushes forth; such is the music of the melodic flute;
With this he hailed *the Panchakshara* of *the* Lord
Of the *Bhoota*-hosts; even as is his wont he played
The flute, the one that could melt the very bones
Of every being that breathes. (947)

23. He took the musical *vangkiyam* in which the interspace
Between the *mudra* and the first of the eight holes
Measures seven fingers' breadth;
Like bees that buzz over flowers to gather pollen,
His flute hummed, rose accelerando and stood
Still or caesural; to the *pure magna cavum* the great one,
-- May he flourish for ever --, applied his beauteous lips. (948)

24. He examined the centres of music, beginning with
The *Mudra;* his fingers played on the seven holes
Carved into the flute in accordance with works
On music, gradually; he found it properly tuned;
He played duly from *shadja* to *nishada*
In *arohana* and *avarohana*. (949)

25. After *kurinchi-p-pann* of varying notations, he played
The *mullai-p-pann* in a crescendo; then he played
The tunes of *Taram* and *Uzhai* of *Palai-Yazh*
Through which he melodiously hailed the *Panchakshara*
Of the Lord in whose matted hair the *Ganga* flows,
And then moved onto *kodi-p-palai* whose tune is *ili*. (950)

26. Of the fourfold classification of music, he chose that
Which was fitting to the tune of *kodi-p-palai* he played;
His fingers played on the stops dexterously
Now covering, now uncovering the holes in due order;
His flute blazed with the crimson lustre, music's own;
He played the *Panchakshara* of the Lord,
-- The Ruler and Bestower of all wealth and foison --,
In the flawless music quintuple. (951)

27. He covered the triple holes whence issued the pitches
Of *mantaram*, *matthimam* and *taram*,
Slightly, semi-lightly and tightly, and played
On the other holes with a fitting movement of fingers;
His ruddy lips of fruitage and the *magna cavum*
Merged in a marriage of melody. (952)

28. The beauteous variations of music, such as
Peruvannam, *idaivannam* and *vanappu* which are
Esteemed great by works on music, he breathed
Through his flute in unison with the sweet sound
Of time and tune; in various movements rose the melody
And he caused the sound of music to spread everywhere. (953)

29. The inner message of the fluten music, played
On the beauteous holes, by the great patron, was truly
The *Panchakshara*; the melody gushed and spread
Everywhere and poured full into the ears, as in the mouths,
Of all living beings, pure ambrosia mixed with
The honey of the celestial *karpaka* blooms. (954)

30. Herds of kine that had grazed on *aruku* grass
Would not chew their cuds; they came near unto him
And stood, oblivious of all else; the calves that were
Sucking milk from their mothers' udders, would no more
Suck; they but stood still with their milk-frothy mouths;
Herds of strong-horned bulls, antelopes and other beasts
Of forest, stood thrilled, with hair erect on their bodies. (955)

31. Dancing peacocks ceased their dance and came
Near unto him; they stood still, enthralled;
As the wafting melody streamed through the ears
And filled their bosoms, the feathered race
Flew to him and stood lost in rapturous music;
The strong neatherds who were working nearby
Abandoned their chores and stood in mute wonder. (956)

32. The denizens of the Polis of Ophidia issued out of
Their familiar apertures to this place;
The divine nymphs that dwelt on the beauteous hills,
By music enchanted, thither came in throngs;
Fadeless *Vidhyatara*, *Charanas*, *Kinnaras*
And gods on high, left their abodes and thither came
Drawn by music, borne by their mounts. (957)

33. With their soft parakeets still holding in their bills
The fruit fed to them by their flowery hands,
The ethereal damsels of the celestial regions, from the edens
Of *Karpaka* flew swiftly on their carriers
Whilst their fragrant locks were tossed by the wind,
And came thither and drank with their ears
The ambrosial music sevenfold. (958)

34. As the teasers and the teased shared alike the harmony
The white-fanged adder, bewitched by music
Fell on the peacock; the tireless lion and the tusker huge
Moved together; the fawn with grass in mouth
Passed by the open-mouthed tiger. (959)

35. Wind would not move, branches would not sway;
Cascades from dark hill would not fall down;
Jungle rivers would neither gurgle nor flow;
Heavens would not rumble and the seven seas stood still. (960)

36. As the playing of the flute by the roseate lips
Of the servitor of the Lord's feet whose crest is decked
With beauteous and incense-breathing *konrai* blooms,
Did melt all, lives -- moving and stationary --,
Lay oned with music; their life and limb
And their inner sensorium too partook
Of one common musicality. (961)

37. The flute's music which emerged from the loving mind
Of the true devotee filled the earth, brought under
Its spell the celestial world and wafted near
The divine ears of the Supreme One who is not to be
Gained by pseudo-love, and who doth enact
The dance divine in the Golden *Ambalam*. (962)

38. It pleased the Lord to hearken to the music
Of *Anayar's* flute; with His Consort -- a liana of *tapas* --,
Whose heart is grace and compassion divine,
The brow-eyed Lord -- the Cause and Source of Music --,
Through heaven's highway, with His matted hair
Bright with the crescent, thither appeared. (963)

39. When from all directions came the hosts of *Gananatas*
And stood before the celestial lords, no alien sound
Was breathed to mar the flute's marvel;
The Lord-Dancer who was pleased to listen to the music
Which in vibrant ripples of flute's own melody
Hailed the Lord's *Panchakshara*,
Graced him with a *darshan* of His presence. (964)

40. The First One that on His Young Bull appeared before him
Desiring to hear for ever the flute's melody
Of the great one of righteous and pious mind,
Spake thus: "May you abide with Us even as you are now here."
Thus, even thus, was he translated to the Lord's divine presence. (965)

41. Gods showered flowers of *karpaka* thick on earth;
Innumerable *munis* great chanting the *Vedic* hymns
Hailed; the glorious one played on the flute
And walked beside Him; thus the Lord, the One of pure *Punya*,
Entered into His Golden *Ambalam*. (966)

In Praise Of St. Sundarar

To conciliate her who indulged in bouderie
He caused the Dancer of ruddy hair to ply twice
As a messenger at night when His dazzling ear-rings
Chased murk away; such was he who had enslaved us;
We would not henceforth the path of evil tread
(That leads to the cycle of birth and death). (967)

Stanza	Line		
2	5-6	cf. Kamban.	"Nizhalitai urangkum methi"
6	4	Kaya	: Memecylon tinctorium.
9	6	The ghosts are as sacred as they are holy.	
13		The scriptures of Music	: Gandharva Vedam. Making of the flute: If the stick is divided into eighteen parts, the stick will be 30 fingers' breadth in length. Its circumference should be of 4 1/2 fingers' breadth. With (2 + 4) six parts gone, it will measure 20 fingers' breadth in length.
15		Naruvili	: Cordia obliqua.
19		Kopa	: Indra-kopa. (Cochineal insect)
		Time	: The Danseuse.
		Call of peacocks	: (Mayuradhwani, Antholika) -- the ragas played during the concert.
		Kopa	: The lips.
		Mullai-buds	: The smile of white teeth.
		Lightning	: The waist.
		Eventide	: The breasts.
		Vast earth	: The theatre.
23		Vangkiyam is a wind-instrument. It refers to the flute and/or the pipe. Flute is made out of bamboo stem, sandal wood, bell-metal, senkali and karun-	

kali which are varieties of mahogany.

Pull is grass and bamboo is a grass.

The flute measures twenty fingers' breadth in length and its circumference is 4 1/2 fingers' breadth. The left end of the flute is closed and the right end left open. The hole into which wind is blown by the lips is called perum thanitthulai (the grand hole). In the context of the stanza, we have translated it as a magna cavum. It is called mudra.

Apart from the big or the grand hole, eight holes are made in the flute, from about its middle to the right end. The last hole is not used when the instrument is played. The other seven represent yezhisai (sapta swaras).

MUMMAIYAL
ULAKANTA-CHARUKKAM

20. The Puranam of Moorti Nayanar

"I am also a servitor of *Moorti* who ruled the world with a triad."

The Tiru-th-Tonda-th-Tokai.

1. The *Pantiya* land flourishes, stablished in the greatness
Of its glorious citizens; it is rich in many mansions
-- Bright and gemmy --, on whose lofty crests clouds abide;
Its city is endowed with hoary glory ever-during on earth
Hailed by men of loving-kindness
Belonging to various walks of life. (968)

2. Pearls are there found in the ruddy mouths of damsels
Who articulate tuneful words of melodious music,
Whose waists are reclining lianas of tender shoots,
Whose eyes are broad and whose shoulders are bamboos;
Eke are they found in the sea into which merges
The cool river whose waves break against the sandy banks. (969)

3. The gentle southerly that blows from the *Potiyil*
Where bees hum in swarms in the gardens
Of sandal trees on whose tops crawl clouds,
Confers Tamil divine whose loftiness is ubiquitous,
And also the fragrant coolth of loving-kindness. (970)

4. There dwells *Lakshmi*, fadless and peerless,
As on the petalled lotus-flower; there dwell women
Like unto her; in their *yazh*-like speech and *koontals*
Flourish sweet music and bees that hum;
The city goes by the name *Maturapuri*. (971)

5. Academies are there where poetical works are tested
Before they are allowed to pass muster; in that city,
-- Vast and hoary and beauteous --, where ever abides
Tamil threefold of sublime loftiness, are schools
For learning; there are also fields toward which
Chanks crawl; there are pools, rich in leaping *kendai*,
Into which rush buffaloes from whose udder flows
Milk profuse and streams on honied lotuses. (972)

6. Chains of pearls are on the sandal-pasted breasts
Borne by the roseate hands of damsels whose pastime
Is to play with balls in the *pandals* of foreyards
Where southerly wafts gently; pearls of dewy sweat
Are on their lotus-faces bright with dangling ear-rings. (973)

7. He would explicate graciously the sublime meaning
Of the Tamil works rich in truth; even He who is
Enshrined at *Tiruvalavai* and He who will redeem us
From the cycle of transmigration, presided over the *Sankam;*
Such was the hoary city, the greatest in the triple worlds. (974)

8. He came to be born as a result of the holy askesis
Wrought by a hoary, glorious family, ever to be lauded,
Which hailed from the mercantile clan of the golden city;
He quelled every type of desire and held fast,
In ever-growing love, to the sole desire true of hailing
The feet of the Lord whose mount is the Bull. (975)

9. Quotidian grew his great love and into passion bloomed;
He rated not kith and kin and friends as aught of worth;
Neither did he hanker after even flawless beatitudes;
His sole concern was the pair of the Lord's lotus-feet;
He was a *moorti* of love and *Moortiar* was he called. (976)

10. Unto our Father of *Alavai*, the Lord who wears
On His ruddy matted hair the crescent of eventide,
He daily and without fail ground sandal-powder
For besmearing its paste on Him; he dedicated himself
To this sacred service to the delight great of devotees. (977)

11. The king of *Vaduka*-Karnataka girt with forests
As fortress, and endowed with a vast army,
To annex forcibly this city, marched southwards
With elephants, horses, chariots and infantry
Comprising strong-shouldered soldiers. (978)

12. He caused his army spread and fill every inch
Of the city and undid the heroic glory of the *Pantiya*,
The ruler of Tamil Nadu of the *Potiyil* girt with gardens
Of sandal trees, and vanquished him;
He made *Madurai* of fragrant gardens, his capital
Whence he wielded his sceptre. (979)

13. By force of arms he conquered the bounteous land
Of the Tamils, but would not duly foster it;
By lack of knowledge he would not be established
In the devotee's way of the holy ash of the Lord
Who bent the Mount *Meru* into a bow; he chose to
Get sunk in the way of the *Samanas*. (980)

14. He took to the (pseudo-) *tapaswic* way of the *Samanas* as true;
Not content with that (downfall), the cruel one started
Oppressing the servitors of the Lord whose matted hair
Sports the crescent; sure it was the working of dreadful Fate. (981)

15. The dark-minded and flint-hearted cruel king,
To subject *Moortiyar*, the great devotee
Of the ruddy-haired Lord -- the Rider of the Bull,
The triple-eyed who is enshrined in *Tiruvalavai* --,
Began to indulge in shameful acts. (982)

16. Nathless the endless cruelties caused by the king,
The servitor, as was his wont, pursued his service, without fail,
To the Lord; who can prevent the doings of the great
Who are firm-poised in their own gloried palladium? (983)

17. Even when the king indulged in acts to shame him endlessly
The servitor swerved not from his path of service;
Then the misruler saw to it that he could in no way
Secure sandalwood for the service of the Lord on whose crest
The *Ganga* rests; sore grew his heart. (984)

18. "O for the day when the sinner, the exceedingly cruel one
Who companying with the *Samana* evil-doers fritteres away
His time, would perish and the world would come to be
Ruled by a sovereign who would uphold the goodly way
Of the holy ash which yields the weal,
As assured by the true *Vedas!*" Thus he mused. (985)

19. As the evil one whose wrath was fired by hatred
Had blocked all the ways whence sandal could be had,
Even when he went in search of it till sun-set
He could not come by goodly sandalwood anywhere;
With a wilted mind, he hied to the Lord's temple. (986)

20. "Unto the service of grinding sandal with the sweet paste
Of which the Lord is to be smeared, an end hath
Alas, come! But nothing can stop my grinding hand."
Thus he resolved and on the rotund stone whereon
Sandalwood is ground, he rested his elbow, and ha,
Ground it so vigorously that the outer skin, nerves
And bones were clean ground away. (987)

21. Blood gushed out from the forearm thus ground
On the stone; the bones opened and spilled out marrow;
The Lord could no longer endure this; His ethereal words
In that dark hour proclaimed thus: (988)

22. "Dear one, do not do this impelled by resolute love;
You will rule all the land, forcibly annexed by the one
Who made you suffer in violent cruelty; total rid
Of all the former evils may you rule benignly the realm,
Pursue your wonted service, and in the end
Join Us in Our great and grand world." (989)

23. He heard the unbodied voice and stood up in dread;
He stopped what he did; his wounds total healed;
His hand regained all its formal glory to which
Was added a sweet aroma; *Moortiyar* glowed
With a lustre rare which was a splendour of wonder. (990)

24. "Lightning flashes and anon vanishes; even so
Is embodiment; *to those whose refuge is not Sankara*,
It does not even last that much!" In proof
Of this dictum, that night, ended the life
Of the warring *Vaduka*-Karnataka king
Who took to the way of the *Samanas*. (991)

25. In this world when lofty and sublime devotees pass away
They pass quick into the World of Truth;
But the evil one that tormented the servitors
Perished only to fall into the horrendous inferno. (992)

26. When died the irretrievably evil one that only did
Deeds of evil, his women who were like painted lianas
And his sorrowing kin wailed and totally wilted;
The dark night like unto him also ended;
The sun rose up in red-rayed splendour. (993)

27. Thither gathered the ministers and duty bound
Performed the obsequies befitting their differing religion;
The spear-wielding king had no son; so they deliberated
On the ways and means to fill the throne. (994)

28. "The country must have a king; it brooks not delay;
Though a country be blessed with land, people
And the like, without a strong-shouldered king
Who knows well to reign endowed with a mighty army
It cannot thrive." Thus they spake. (995)

29. They added: "In ways manifold he protects all lives;
Under his spreading parasol he makes them all
Pursue their respective walks of life; so does he reign,
The sovereign; if you conceive of a world
Without a monarch, verily it'll be like unto
A body bereft of its life." (996)

30. Pondering over many things they concluded thus:
"The king is no more; we should do that only
Which is meet in the context." Solaced and clarified
They said: "Let us blindfold the tusker which is like
A dark hill; whosoever is secured by its hill-like trunk,
Shall be invested with the right to rule this world." (997)

31. They performed *pooja* in unison with the sublime rites
Prescribed in the *sastras*; they hoodwinked
The tusker with a clean band; it was decked with
A plate of gold on its forehead; from it poured
Like rain, ichor; they charged him thus:
"To bear on his strong shoulders the reign
Of this vast land, bear on your hand a worthy man." (998)

32. The blindfolded tusker moved away in joy and roamed
Through the hoary fortressed city; it passed through
The streets and reached the sky-high tower
Of *Tiruvalavai* girt with forted walls,
Great and strong and beauteous. (999)

33. The servitor who was blessed the night before,
Thought thus: "If it be the grace of our Lord,
I'll sure take on myself the kingship of this land."
Freed of his mental depression he came out and stood
Without the temple of the Lord, the wearer of *konrai* blooms. (1000)

34. The royal tusker walked swift thither and bowed
Before the great patron who came to be born on earth
By reason of the cumulative *tapas* of the cosmos,
And, so bending that its lustrous gems serene
Inlaid on its plate of gold, touched the earth,
Lifted him and had him seated on its neck. (1001)

35. The ministers who had firm resolved to do away with evil,
Beholding him seated by the tusker on its neck
Fell at his feet and rose up; the whole city then
Roared like an ocean rich in breakers. (1002)

36. By his side who would rule the whole world,
By the grace of the Lord concorporate with His Consort,
-- Bejewelled and liana-like --, shells and *tarais* blared;
With drums resounded everywhere every type
Of musical organ; from all places issued benedictions. (1003)

37. They humbly caused him descend from the tusker
Of loving eyes; they led him through the *mantapam*
Decked with honied wreaths and garlands of gems,
Where the king is crowned and had him enthroned
Under the moon-like parasol, and commenced
The rites relating to the coronation. (1004)

38. Priests well-versed in *mantras* and *yoga*
Fixed *vetikais* in the ever-abiding directions
And reared blazing fire in the auspicious homa-pit;
Golden vessels were strung with threefold threads
And pots were filled with holy water. (1005)

39. *Moortiyar* who was blessed with clarity of intellect
By reason of his constant contemplation of Lord Siva
Spoke to them of auspicious deeds, that came
And hailed him, thus: "If *Samanism*
Of recent origin would vanish and *Saivism*
-- Whole and absolute --, would rise aloft,
I would bear the world and sweetly reign." (1006)

40. When ministers and wise men well-versed in works
Which confer true life on man, heard him speak thus,
Falling at his feet they said: "O great one! we will
Abide by what you are pleased to tell us;
Who will dare disobey you?" (1007)

41. Then he said: "Were I to rule the world, the holy ash
Shall be my royal anointment; *rudraksha* beads,
The insignia of the Lord, shall be my royal jewels;
The regal crown that I wear shall be but the crown
Of my dense and matted hair." (1008)

42. When they of limitless learning, and the ministers
Of firm intellect, sound scholarship and trustfulness
Ever-growing, heard him speak thus, they said:
"The King's message is great and grand indeed."
They performed all the rites which pleased his heart
To invest the king of *tapas* with sceptre and crown. (1009)

43. On all sides resounded auspicious blessings and organs;
The monarch whose crown was that of matted hair
Proceeded to *Tiruvalavai* where is enshrined
The Lord whose feet were unknown to the Boar,
And hailed Him; thence he rode in procession
On the back of the royal tusker through the long streets. (1010)

44. He descended from the tusker at the threshold
Of the gemmy mansion, moved into the durbar
And ascended the throne of gold; to the waving
Of beauteous *chamaras* and under the white parasol
He abode, and bore the reign of the world. (1011)

45. The just ministers of manifold portfolios
Shrewdly divined his wishes and implemented them;
The bewildering fetters of *Samanism* stood broken;
The ever-during way of the holy ash began to thrive
For ever; ubiquitous Saivism soared aloft and flourished. (1012)

46. For the spreading and flourishing of the true
And subtle message of the brow-eyed Lord's scriptures
Moortiyar ruled the world with the triad,
-- The means par excellence that confer salvation --,
Namely, the holy ash that ends embodiment,
The sublime garland sacred of *rudraksha* beads
And the crown of matted hair. (1013)

47. Poised in piety he cut away for ever all nexus
With dames of perfumed locks; he quelled the five
Hostile senses as well as all his foes; unique was his
Sceptre's reign; he fostered all good that would
Endure till the end of the world, and protected lives
From ills and troubles that would beset them. (1014)

48. Many a monarch flocked round his feet
And hailed him; he ruled this world, extirpating
All ills; he also was blessed to reign, never swerving
From his servitorship, the spiritual empire.
Thus in the end, the great one reached the feet
Of the Lord of heroic anklet. (1015)

49. Having hailed the great servitor who on the huge stone
Ground his elbow, and rode on the warring tusker,
We proceed to historicise Murukanar,
The great Brahmin of Pukaloor of vast, bright streets,
Girt with fragrant gardens cloud-capped. (1016)

Stanza	Line		
2	6	The cool river. The Tampraparani.	
5	6	Kendai	: A type of fish; Cyprinus fimbriatus. The poem ends with a pun. Ceyyul mikku Eru Sangam: Ceyyul means poem; it also means "into the field(s)." Sangam means academy; it also means chank(s).
9	5	Moorti	: An embodiment; an idol.
20	6-7	The servitor ground the outer skin, nerves, veins, olecranon, ulna and ulnare into pulp.	

21. The Purana of Muruka Nayanar

"I am also a servitor of Murukan....."

-The *Tiru-th-Tonda-th-Tokai*

1. The town that is beloved of our Lord whose matted hair
Sports the flood of Ganga and who is embraced by
The shoot-like soft hands of Himavant's daughter
Whose locks are decked with flowers of pollen,
Is Poompukaloor girt with vast flowery gardens
Situate in the land of the Cholas of bright gemmy crowns
And enriched by the river Kaveri. (1017)

2. Like the minds of goodly devotees, white shone
Their frames smeared with the holy ash protective;
So, in that hoary and glorious town, night wasn't dark;
So too the black beetles of pretty wings that sipped honey
Resting on flowers shone bright with lustre. (1018)

3. As bees that hummed choice tunes, fluttered
By the soft branches studded with buds about to bloom,
They poured colourful honey; not only the mouths
Of fragrant blooms oped but the tuneful beaks
Of soft and young starlings which abode
At all the sides of the cool gardens, also oped
And poured the sweet honey of divine decads. (1019)

4. As bees buzzed, it was not only the fragrant lotus-buds
That burgeoned with honey-dew in the glorious pools,
But the lotus-visages of devotees too were tear-bedewed
When they rapturously hearkened to the nectarean hymns
And divine psalms on the God of gods. (1020)

5. In that town of glory and foison and tranquil beauty
Called Pukaloor, he came to be born in the family
Of renowned Brahmins; in the Vedas was he well-versed;
He stood atop Wisdom's peak; stablished below the roseate feet
Of the Lord whose jewels are serpents, and filled with flawless
Devotion chaste, he -- Murukanar --, was endowed
With a mind that melted in devotion. (1021)

6. He dwelt at Tiru-p-Pukaloor rich in fields
Where red lotuses burgeon; thither leap the carps
Over sluices; crabs wake up from their bed of (lotus) leaves.
He was blessed with the true beatitude of servitorship
To the Lord who rides the Bull; he would gather
Fresh flowers and leaves to deck the Lord's matted hair. (1022)

7. Waking before the break of day, he would bathe
In the sacred flood; then would he fare forth and gather
In baskets variform, innumerable flowers
After carefully examining them, before plucking,
To see if they are about to bloom fragrantly;
These he collected to deck the Lord's matted hair
Whence course the Ganga and the moon. (1023)

8. Flowers of branches, blooms of plants, blooms
Of cool waters and petalled flowers of rich creepers
He would gather, as flowers fit to deck the crown
Of the Lord of beauteous smile, the Originator of the Vedas,
Whose bow was the Mount Meru strung with the serpent. (1024)

9. The wearer of the sacred thread would seek
A clean and sequestered place and would weave
Wreaths, chaplets, garlands, fragrant bouquets,
Leis to engird the staves, wreaths like anklets
And huge nosegays spilling fragrant pollen. (1025)

10. He would weave wreaths for the service of the Lord
At the specified hours ordained, and carry them;
He would deck the Lord with these, and duly perform *pooja*
In love; he would ever chant the *Panchakshara*,
The import of the divine decads and the sustenance
Of his consciousness too. (1026)

11. He who was in the Vedas well-versed avoided
The forbidden, and stood stablished in the righteous way;
He was also endowed with the glory of becoming
A friend of the Godly son who was fed
From a bowl of ruddy gold, the breast-milk
--The Godly Gnosis hailed by the clarified Gospels --,
By Her, the Creatrix and Fosterer of all the worlds. (1027)

12. Quotidian and without fail he performed *pooja*
In delight great to the Lord enshrined
At Varthamaneeccharam of Tiru-p-Pukaloor;
Chanting the glorious *Panchakshara* he hailed
And adored the Lord unknown to Brahma, the swan,
And *Vishnu*, the boar. (1028)

13. Divine Murukanar as a guerdon for his performance
Of *pooja* in this birth and also in births previous,
Could attend the glorious wedding of the Godly son
Of Pukali and come by the bliss of release
Granted by the grace of the Lord, the Rider
Of the red-eyed Bull; he reached the divine shade
Of the Lord's feet, thus blessed with everlasting life. (1029)

14. I adore the true service divine of Murukanar
Of Pukaloor who by reason of his *pooja* to the Lord
-- The wearer of serpent on His waist --, rests under
His feet; I now proceed to narrate the glory
Of the devotee-Pasupatiyar that hailed the Lord
With *Rudram*, embosoming Him that ever willingly
Comes to the guileless. (1030)

Stanza Line

3 7 Parakeets and starlings were minstrels of holy hymns in the hoary Tamil Nadu.

22. The Puranam of Rudra Pasupatiyar

"I am a servitor to Rudra Pasupati also"

- The *Tiru-th-Tonda-th-Tokai.*

1. Great Tiru-th-Thalaiyoor among all towns, is
Endowed with superior excellence; it is situate
In the land of the Kaveri, and its fields and groves get
Richly watered; here flourish flawless families galore,
Well-endowed, and lacking nothing. (1031)

2. The fire of the sacrificial pit tended by Brahmins
Supplied them with rain; the dense gardens,
Fragrant and flowery, supplied them with honey;
The kine gave unto the Lord the *Panchakavya;*
The town bestowed on men *dharma, niti* and *salpu.* (1032)

3. In that grace-abounding town, from the family
Of Brahmins firm-established in the truth of the Vedas,
He, the pure one, came to be born; he was called Pasupatiyar;
In love he served the Lord whose mount, the red-eyed Bull
Is *Vishnu,* and whose Consort is the liana-like daughter
Of rich and auric Himavant. (1033)

4. Chanting *Sri Rudram,* this Brahmin hailed
The flower-feet of the Lord, unknown to Vishnu;
His heart poised in Vedic devotion, in love
And without break, he was ever chanting *Rudram*
Which is by the Vedas treasured; thus he throve
In this way of life as a leader. (1034)

5. To the endless din of birds' twitter and the hum
Of honey-bees, he would enter the pool where burgeon
Fragrant red-lotuses like a blaze of flame on water
And where dark *varals* leap and rows of carps roll. (1035)

6. Thither would be stand neck-deep in the lucid water cool,
Hold his hands above his head, folded in adoration
And practise the purposive chanting of *Sri Rudram*
In loving devotion of the Lord in whose matted hair
The white-waved Ganga flows and overflows. (1036)

7. He who was like unto Brahma throned on lotus
Chanted *Sri Rudram* -- the very fruit of the true Vedas --,
During broad day and eventide, without fail;
When he chanted thus for some days he attained
At-one-ment; the Lord of Uma was pleased. (1037)

8. The primal Lord approved of the loving devotee's
Glorious and rare askesis and his excelling mastery
And regulation of the Vedic *mantras*, and in grace,
Blessed him to abide in the blameless world of Siva. (1038)

9. As he chanted *Sri Rudram* with ever-during love,
He came to abide under the gracious dancing feet
Of the Lord and came to be hailed by the world
With the renowned name Rudra-Pasu-Patiyar. (1039)

10. Having hailed the glory of Rudra-Pasu-Patiyar
Who was blessed to abide near Him and hail Him
Of the sharp trident, we now proceed to hymn
The divine servitor, Nalai-p-povar who would
Serve without the temple and without the precincts
Of forted Tillai. (1040)

Stanza	Line		
2	5	Niti	: It is the righteous way of life.
		Salpu	: Salpu is Virtue resting on the five pillars of Love, Modesty, Beneficence, Benignant Grace and Truth.
5	4	Varal	: A fish-Ophicephalus striatus.
6	3	Sri Rudram	: Read: "Rudra as an Embodiment of Divine Ambivalence in the Satarudriya Stotram," by Bruce Long. Saiva Siddhantam, Volume Two, Dharmapuram, 1988.

23. The Puranam of Tiru Nalai-p-povar

"I am a servitor of Tiru-Nalai-p-povar the upright"

\- The *Tiru-th-Tonda-th-Tokai*

1. It is a fecund and hoary town admired by the world
For its glory; it is Aatanoor of Melkanadu
In the Chola realm; here the lotuses of vast fields
Situate on both sides of the pure-watered Kollidam,
Receive with their flowery hands, the gold and the gems
Borne aloft by the billowy hands of the river. (1041)

2. In that town glows the great lustre of the holy ash;
In its ridged fields rich in sweetcane-juice
When ploughing is done with buffaloes, finned *varals*
Leap aloft; crabs that thrive in mire slowly move out
Through the furrows and ascend the lotuses thither to litter;
Witnessing this, lotuses spill their fragrant pollen. (1042)

3. The branches of trees rich in buds and fragrant shoots
Wave on high as if touching the *surya-mandala*;
Such is the growth of the dense trees cloud-capped;
The nimbi move and bees wheel their flights;
So in those flower gardens, it for ever pours,
Now a shower of rain; anon a shower of honey. (1043)

4. *Valais* which leap from the depths of water,
Hit the trunks of coco-palms rich in fragrant spathes
And strong bunches of green coconuts; the trees wave
And shed their ripe coconuts which get buried (in the mire)
With the fish that attacked them;
Jack-fruit burst and with honey inundate them;
Then float the coconuts and the retrieved fish play about. (1044)

5. The riches of fields and gardens green,
Yielded by manual labour fill everywhere
The spacious town; the lofty and innumerable mansions
Rich with such foison, pierce the clouds with their tops;
Dwelling places for ever increase and the town
Flourishes with good many extensions. (1045)

6. Outside the town, on the other side of the ridges
Of fields which form a belt of *marudam*
Is the habitation of the Pulaiyas who are
Farmhands that dwelt with their loving kith and kin.
Over their crowded old huts roofed of dried grass
Green creepers of bottle-gourds grew luxuriant. (1046)

7. In their courtyards were drying straps of leather;
There roamed chicks with their mother-hen
Whose claws were sharp and whose feet were small;
When dark-hued urchins decked with iron-bracelets
Made away with young pups, the tiny bells in their girdles
Drowned the small and soft barking of the pups. (1047)

8. Under shady *maruda* trees the farmwives lulled
Their babes asleep on cured hides, strong and small;
Under shady *vanchi* trees of soft twigs, were sunk
Huge pots in which rested incubating hens;
On mango trees were hung leather-strapped drums;
Under coco-palms rested the tiny-headed pups;
The slum was full of such trees. (1048)

9. Over the cool and ramiferous *kanchi* trees, rested
Roosters of ruddy crests, and just before dawn,
They summoned the farmers, able and firm-fibred,
To bestir and ply themselves in their agricultural work;
Under the shade of these trees, the curly-haired
Farmwives pounded paddy singing aloud 'pestle-songs'. (1049)

10. On all the sides of pools, water-fowls would chirp;
As they walked toddling, lilies on their *koontals* blowed
And showered honey; the farmwives decked their hair
With sheaves of paddy, quaffed toddy and danced for joy;
Drums then resounded keeping time. (1050)

11. He came to be born with the continuum of consciousness
Of true love for the ankleted feet of the Lord;
He, the peerless one, called Nandanar, flourished
In that slum of Pulaiyas; he was entitled
To the hereditary rights of his clan. (1051)

12. Ever since his age of awareness, unto the Great One
That wears the crescent as a chaplet, he fostered
A great and immense love in his pious heart;
He would render such dharma as would befit his race;
He was firm established in the service to the Lord's feet. (1052)

13. He satisfied his need for food from the income
Of his vocation as a "Proclaimer by beat of tom-tom";
He pursued the craft permitted to his race;
He stood poised in servitorship; to all the temples
Where abides the Great one of the sharp trident,
For the use of drums and such other instruments (1053)

14. He supplied covering leather and binding straps
And similar materials; for melodious veenas
And *yazhs* he provided the various guts for strings;
For the *pooja* of the Lord of gods, he supplied
Gorochana and the like. (1054)

15. Thus he served in keeping with his vocation
In all possible ways and by all possible means;
He would stand away from the entrance to the temple
And in devotion, true and abundant,
Dance and sing in love;
Thus, even thus, he flourished. (1055)

16. In love he contemplated the hallowed feet
Of the Lord Sivalokanatan enshrined in Tiru-p-punkoor
And desired to render willingly such service as he could;
So with his mind oned with the Lord, he left Aatanoor
In longing love, and reached its outskirts. (1056)

17. The divine servitor sang glorious songs and desired
To adore the Lord by directly beholding Him, even as
He stood in front of the entrance to the Temple;
To grant him his wish, the brow-eyed Lord
Of Punkoor girt with cloud-capped forted walls,
Commanded His martial Bull to step aside, and thus
He blessed him with His *darshan*, unobstructed. (1057)

18. Nandanar who was poised in the godly way which would
Help one cross the cycle of birth and death,
Stood before the temple-entrance, and adored
The Lord Sivalokanatan; having hailed Him
He bowed again and rose up; he moved away
With his straps of leather waving on his back;
He eyed behind the temple a great depression
Which he excavated into a tank. (1058)

19. Having dug a spacious tank by the grace of the Lord
Who wears on His crown a wreath of golden *konrai*,
He circumambulated the Lord's temple,
Bowed, rose up, danced in joy and then
Took leave of Him and reached his town. (1059)

20. In this way he visited and adored all the shrines
Where the Lord abides in delight, and performed
True service; he was constantly goaded
By a great love to adore the Lord's *Tillai Chitrambalam;*
Greater and greater grew this passionate love. (1060)

21. He would not sleep during night; when day broke
He would think thus: "My low and inferior birth
Will not suffer my adoring at that holy shrine;
Even this thought comes to me by my Lord's fiat."
Thus thinking he would smother all attempts of visit;
Yet when nobly-bred love increasingly importuned him
He would say: "I'll go to-morrow." (1061)

22. Having spent many days saying, "I'll go to-morrow"
He reached a stage when he could no longer endure it;
To end his embodiment, fragile as *poolai*-flower,
He left his hoary town rich in spathaceous areca-trees
And came near to the outskirts of Tillai, girt with fields
Where *valai* fish leap and play about. (1062)

23. He prostrated at Tillai's bourne and rose up;
He beheld the smoke issuing dense
From the upsurging fire in the sacrificial pits; he heard
The chorus-chanting of the students of the Vedas
And knew that the sacred *matams* were nearby;
He thought of his base birth, felt scared,
Refused to move further and stood transfixed. (1063)

24. Standing thus he contemplated its glorious inaccessibility.
Thus he mused: "If one could proceed further,
Cross and pass into the entrance of the city
Girt with forted walls, one could behold there.
In every one of the hill-like mansions *vetikais*
Fronting *akutis*, in all numbering three thousand;
Thus it is said." (1064)

25. "As it is thus, I canst not go there." So he thought.
Fear-besieged he would not dare proceed further;
Outside the forted walls of the city,
With great and insatiate love swelling within,
And with a heart that melted and hands that adored,
He went round and round the ineffably great limits
Of the city; thus, even thus, he spent his days. (1065)

26. He circumambulated day and night,
Pondered over the inaccessibility of the shrine,
And the mind of the servitor devoted to the Lord's feet, wilted;
The thought, "When will I ever adore the divine dance
Of the blue-throated Lord beauteous?"
Saddened him and he closed his eyes in slumber. (1066)

27. "This (my wretched birth) is sure the clog."
Thus thinking he slept; the gracious Lord
Of the *Ambalam* sensed his distress and to end
All the miseries of the aeviternal servitor,
He appeared in his dream with a gracious smile. (1067)

28. "To end this embodiment, I bid you enter
The flame; this done, come to Us along
With the wearers of the sacred thread." Thus He spake
To him and also to the Tillai-Brahmins
Bidding them prepare the fire for immolation;
Then the Lord, the True Ens, (went) to His *Ambalam*. (1068)

29. All the Tillai-Brahmin-*tapaswis* true
Heard their Lord and were struck with fear;
They gathered before the *Perambalam* and said:
"We'll do as graciously commanded by the Lord."
Then with spiralling love they came to the servitor. (1069)

30. "O lord, we come to you at the bidding of the Lord
Of *Ambalam* to rear for you fire fierce."
When they spake thus, the melting servitor said:
"I stand redeemed!" and hailed them all;
The *munis* of the divine Gospels reared the flame
And duly apprised the servitor. (1070)

31. Thus informed by the Brahmins, before the tower
Cloud-capped and situate in the southern forted wall,
Panoplied in the perfect grace of the Lord-God,
He came unto the fire-pit prepared by the Brahmins,
Invoked the feet of the Lord and went round
The fire-pit in pious adoration. (1071)

32. He adored with his folded hands, and with his mind
Set on the Dancing Feet, entered the fire-pit;
Gone was the unreal form of *Asuddha-Maya*, and now
He blazed with the true and pious form of a *Muni*;
With the sacred thread dangling on his chest
And the matted hair on his crest,
Up he rose from out of the pit of fire. (1072)

33. When thus he rose up from ruddy fire, verily
He was like unto Brahma enthroned on red lotus;
Celestial *tuntupis* resounded from on high;
The immortal heavenly Lords rejoiced uproariously;
They rained fresh-petalled *mandara* flowers cool. (1073)

34. The (spiritually) rich Tillai-Brahmins, folding
Their hands, adored him; great and worthy servitors
Bowed before him and felt supremely delighted.
Thus, even thus, the sainted Brahmin, Tiru-Nalai-p-povar
Emerged forth to hail the Ankleted Feet that dance
In *Tiruchitrambalam*, the cynosure of the Gospels rare. (1074)

35. With the Brahmins of Tillai, he entered the city
And reached the tower of the Lord, whose hand sports
A sylvan fawn; adoring this he moved in swiftly
And came unto the proscenium near which the Lord
Doth dance to mantle the cosmos with redemptive grace.
None saw him thereafter. (1075)

36. Brahmins marvelled; *munis* rare adored;
The great Dancer of infinite bliss, did away
With the flawed Karma of the servitor that reached Him,
And blessed him to hail for ever His beauteous lotus-feet. (1076)

37. Having cast away by purificatory immolation
His flawed embodiment and transformed into a blemishless *muni*,
He reached the hallowed feet of the Lord of *Ambalam*;
We hail his lustrous feet sacred, and proceed
To narrate the divine service of Tiru-k-Kurippu-th-Tondar
Whose toil did away with *pasam*. (1077)

Stanza	Line		
6	6	Bottle-gourd	: Cucurbita legearia
8	1	Maruda	: Arjuna tree.
	3	Vanchi	: A tree. Glabrous mahua of the Malabar coast.
14	5	Gorochana	: Cow's bezoar.

17

The Lord is enshrined in the adytum and He faces straight the entrance to the temple. Between the adytum and the entrance is enshrined Nandi. If the icon of Nandi is of the normal size, normally no difficulty will be encountered in having a darshan of the Lord even from the entrance-tower. At Tiru-p-punkoor, the icon of Nandi is unusually of a large size obstructing such vision.

Agamas have it that a worshipper should not straight proceed near to the sanctum sanctorum. He should humbly stand behind Nandi, hail him, and then with his leave, proceed to adore the Lord. Nandi is known as Aadi-Guru (The Primal Preceptor) and Campu the second. Campu is a name of Siva. Siva is also called Nandi. "Nandi Namam Nama Sivayave" are the words of St. Sambandhar.

An unexampled exception in the mode of worship was made by the Lord in the case of Nandanar, the untouchable. Yes, he was an untouchable and no evil or pollution could ever touch him. The Lord demonstrated to the world the fact that he was even greater than the Tillai Brahmins.

24	5	Vetikai	: The small platform before the sacrificial pit where holy vessels etc., are kept for worship.
		Akuti	: The homa-kunda; sacrificial-pit.
32	3	Asuddha Maaya	: The causa materialis of the cosmos.
33	5	Mandara	: A celestial tree.

24. The Purana of Tiru-k-Kurippu-th-Tonda Nayanar

"I am also a servitor of the servitors of Tiru-k-Kurippu-th-Tondar"

- The *Tiru-th-Tonda-th-Tokai.*

1. Goodly Tondai-Nadu is great in its *tapas* pure,
As it is here, She, poised in the Agamic way extolled
By all the four Gospels of gnosis, wrought askesis rare
And was blessed to embrace Her Lord unique.
She is to all lives the Mother of infinite mercy
And she protects them (in keeping with their *Karma*). (1078)

2. For the flourishing of the great leading families
Who love the impartial way linked to extensive weal,
It fosters many a city of uberty, girt with
Puissant forted walls; such is the great Tondai-Nadu
Established in immeasurable and hoary loftiness. (1079)

3. The lowly devotees of Pazhayanoor who solicit weal only,
When stymied by evil flaw, weighed as it were
In the scale their life against their plighted word
To a merchant; it was in the great Tondai-Nadu
The glorious honouring of the plighted word took place
(Which cost them their very lives). (1080)

4. When he beheld the holy ash -- the very form of Siva-Sakti --,
(In fuller's earth with which a washerman was smeared),
The Chera king said: "I am Chera, your servitor."
His glory spread far and wide; in his hallowed Malai-Nadu
Thrive victorious heroes who wear dazzling jewels;
These claim the citizens of the great Tonda-Mandala
To be their brothers-in-law, as of right. (1081)

5. As the beauteously bejewelled Uma sought perfection
Of her love for the blue-throated Lord, and here
Performed dharma, the world proclaims ex cathedra
That the great Tondai-Nadu in which is situate the city
(Of Kanchi) whose lofty forted walls reach the crescent,
Stands fast in virtue's path. (1082)

6. Cataracts and rivers of the *Kurinji* realm fall down
And roll on with flawless gems; in the *Mullai* regions
Variform honey-bees sip fresh nectar from flowers;
In the *Maruda* realms carps leap and break the ridges;
In the *Neithal*, women wash pearls and dry them. (1083)

7. *Kuravas* winnow seeds of *Karamani* from gems
And sow them in the *Kurinji* tracts; in the *Mullai* realms
Milch-cows and antelopes graze together;
In the *Mardua* fields birds perch on lotus flowers,
Catch and eat (iral fish); in the regions of backwaters
The sharp bones of sharks are objects of adoration. (1084)

8. Over hills of *Kurinji*, clouds from sky pour down pearls;
In *Mullai* tracts, cool bunches of *konrai* shower gold;
On loam in fields, channels scatter pearls; vessels unload
Elephants in harbours near which *kandal* grows. (1085)

9. The montane hamlets are rich in red-millet flour
Soaked in honey; the sylvan villages abundantly supply
Pullarisi cooked in milk; in arable tracts endowed with
Cool fords, goodly rice well-cooked, ghee, sugarcane
And fruits are aplenty; in the littoral regions
Schools of fishes serve for great food. (1086)

10. *In Kurinji* where bees which hum like flute, sing
Kurinji-p-pann; in *Mullai*, drums resound
Like clouds, and *mullai* creepers blossom;
In *Marudam* parakeets softly lisp and sleep
On *Maruda* trees; *Neithal* thrives with shady screwpine,
And neithal flowers bloom in backwaters. (1087)

11. In that land of great fourfold regions
In hilly *Kurinji*, its people rear millet grains;
In all the vast fields where millet is grown
Peacocks of spreading wings can be eyed;
Women of curly hair who keep watch over those fields
Are pretty like the very peafowls. (1088)

12. The bees that lay embedded in the curly locks
Of paradisal *apsaras* (who came to hail *Kalatthi),*
Flew over and settled on the locks of *Koticchiyar*
Of swelling breasts and fair adornments.
Blessed is the land, for thither is the cloud-capped Hill
Of Tiru-k-Kalatthi where is enshrined
The Rider of the red-eyed Bull who is Vishnu. (1089)

13. In that land of munificent *Kurinji* region
Is Tiruvidaicchuram where the Supreme One
Who sports the Ganga on His matted hair, is enshrined;
Seeking a different and unique beatitude
The celestial lords and ladies came to be born here
As peerless hunters and huntresses to hail the Lord;
Such indeed is the sublime loftiness of the land. (1090)

14. This land is endowed with Tiru-k-Kazhu-k-kunram
Where abides the God of gods; it has vast stretches
Dight with flowery springs and spas, where *Koticchiyar*
Who deck 'their full-grown hair
With golden blooms beauteous,
And celestial damozels plunge and bathe.
Can any one ever say that this
Kurinji land, where bees hum over twigs,
Is anywise flawed in its ever-during askesis? (1091)

15. Beyond beauteous *Mullai* and *Kurinji,* are
A few patches of elevation full of broken bits of stones.
Here are many pagodas for Neeli of ebon hue
Who wields the sabre; these could be fittingly called
Palai, known for its hot summer and fierce noon. (1092)

16. The extensive stretch of *Mullai* begins at the end
(Of *Kurinji);* into this gushes forth sweeping
In its flood, flowers buzzed over by bees,
The mighty jungle river, and spreads and rises
To the top of soft-leaved *Kuruntam* on which
Mullai creepers have woven a soft flowery bower,
The habitat of hares which now flee from the flood. (1093)

17. The *Kala* plants spread out the rumour that *mullai* buds
Have purloined the teeth's beauty of damsels
Whose foreheads resemble the clipped moon;
Sensing this they ope their petals in smile and say:
"Thieving is common to the Kalas too; else how could
They be as black as the dames' *koontals?"* (1094)

18. In that *Mullai* realm, herds of fawns vanquished
By the sword-like eyes of lasses, roam everywhere;
Also are to be eyed everywhere *mullai* creepers
Put to shame by the slender waists of women.
Tamil grammar proclaims red-eyed *Vishnu*
To be the 'Lord of *Mullai*'; he adores Lord Siva
Who is joyously enshrined in Tirumullaivasal. (1095)

19. That it may perennially supply water
For the divine ablutions of the Lord who wears
The crescent and whose divine frame is
With the Holy Ash besmeared, the Ganga manifests as a spring
In bright flowery *Kalikai*, the megapolis;
This is a great treasure of the *Mullai* region. (1096)

20. In the *Maruda* land abutting the *Mullai* land
Rich in mullai creepers of soft fragrant blooms,
Runs many a billowy river near unto fields
Where green-leaved lotuses huge burgeon
And fills tanks and lakes of strong banks
Where the loud chirp of water-fowls is heard. **(1097)**

21. The milk that flowed from the divine udder of *Surabi*
Of the glorious *tapaswi*, swelled and flooding
Coursed down the Nandi-Hill, sweeping pearls,
Sandal-wood, eagle-wood and the like besides gems;
Thus ran the river *Pali*, filling many a lotus-tank. (1098)

22. Like mother's breasts whence issues milk abundant
When her suckling child touches them, the dry river
Gushes forth when farmers during summer dig
Into its sand-dunes; the water is gathered into channels
Through which it flows and then overflows on the banks
Even smashing the weirs of the vast low-lying fields. (1099)

23. Such rivers flow, and gushing fill
The strong-banked tanks nigh the fields;
When vents are flung open from the watched-over dams
The waters rush into channels seeing which
The farmers shout in sheer joy. (1100)

24. He-buffaloes, the cause of peerless uberty,
Are yoked to ploughs and plied to make the soil miry;
Some broadcast seed-paddy of silver shoot;
Some are busy plucking seedlings, while some others
Engage themselves in transplanting them;
Thus are pursued many acts in ways dinsome. (1101)

25. *Valai* fish block the flow of water in channels;
Water rising breaks the bunds and flows away;
Kendai fish throng thick in the depressions
Of the watery fields and thus raise the level of ridges;
Varal fish leap into the small vents and stop the flow. (1102)

26. In the *Maruda* realm richly endowed with water,
On red-lotuses teeming in vast and ridged fields
Sleep gravid chanks that are tired; all the area
Dazzles with a greenery rare; the chanks there
Look like the moon girt with a belt of light. (1103)

27. Tall Kazhai-sugarcanes grow near crops of paddy
That thrive well; near the canes are areca trees,
Near which are coconut trees rich in bunches;
Plantains of green fruit, rich jack-fruit trees
And mango trees of dangling fruit delicious
Are in gardens protected by a running fence. (1104)

28. The wealthy towns hoary are girt with fields
Vast and cool; paddy granaries mark the houses;
In its streets dight with great mansions, dwell
Glorious householders; tapers burn hospitably there. (1105)

29. The prosperous towns where Brahmins dwell
Foster the Vedas and the glorious arts; in their homes
Are chanted the scriptures; from their homa-pits
Where oblations are offered, rises aloft smoke
That into throngs of nimbi, turns. (1106)

30. Vallam thrives gloriously hailing the holy ash;
Here thrives the race of Brahmins in whose families
Women-devotees were born thanks to goodly *Karma;*
It was here the Lord blessed the *Asura Teekkali*
And graciously freed him from trouble. (1107)

31. The *Maruta* realm is rich with rubies rolled down
By the waterfalls of *Kurinji;* its streams are full
Of flowers washed ir 'o them from the *Mullai* land;
On the banks of *Pali* is TiruMalperu in which
The peerless temple of the river-crested Lord
Is situate and at which temple He abides in joy. (1108)

32. What else should be said of its glory? It is rich
In many temples of Siva on the banks of many rivers;
Is not the *Maruta* realm blessed with Tiru-p-Pasoor
Where the Lord who peeled off the hide of the long-trunked
Pachydermatous behemoth, is enshrined. (1109)

33. The minstrels who sing in the *pann* of *Marutam*
On th- flowery fields well-watered, deck themselves
With soft flowers, gather under the shade of mango trees
With their beloved kin and strum their *maruta-yazh;*
Nearby are beauteous fields, beyond which
Lies *Neythal* marked by its dark backwaters. (1110)

34. *Paratavas* of white sandy fords weave fishing-nets;
Their red-eyed women weave wreaths of *serunti* blooms;
Alavas are busy measuring salt, in salt pans;
By their women -- *Alatthiyar* of swan's own gait
And lovely mien --, are pearls measured. (1111)

35. Nulaiyas vend fat fishes; oh cruel is their calling!
Nulaicchis vend coral gathered from the reef
Near sandy shore; *turaivas* dive for pearls
And gather chanks; their women whose eyes are like
Symmetrically slit slices of tender mango,
Bathe in joy in sandy wells. (1112)

36. On the edge of sea runs an eddying stream
Over which *punnai* spills its gold, the pollen;
The bees that are cradled in fragrant *neythal* blooms
Are fed with pollen by the long-leaved fragrant screwpines
That grow on the banks of the backwaters. (1113)

37. The defective breaches in the fertile banks
Of the backwaters are filled with *mullai* plants
Whose thorns are strong and whose rich buds are
Red, cool and fragrant; the pollen of *gnazhal*
From the gardens of *Neytal* rich in fords where swans play,
Conceal the white and soft sands of the shore. (1114)

38. In the habitations of the fishwives, near which
The leaping billows dash and break,
The women whose shoulders are bamboo-like,
Display for sale carp fish; their eyes which roll
Like carp-fish aren't however for sale;
The words of these are sweet to hearken and they
Match the melody of *Sevvazhi-Yazh*. (1115)

39. Deluded, the King cut down cruelly the provision
For temples; by an interlineation the Peerless One
Caused the words, "Except Tiruvotriyoor"
To appear in the document; the *Neytal* owns
The divine area fronting that great temple. (1116)

40. Tirumayilapuri flourishing in gloried truth,
Tiruvanmiyoor girt with flowery gardens fragrant,
And many a shrine where the Lord that wears
The snake of venomous sacs is enshrined, are there.
Can its fully-fledged askesis be deemed small? (1117)

41. From the sea whence roll waves enfolding chanks,
The coral-creeper spreads and twines with its shoots
The branches of sandal-tree; thus are there
Many lands linking *Neytal* with *Kurinji*
Where thrive great towns like *Maa Mallai*
Rich in mansions of pennant-flaunting balconies. (1118)

42. The carps from the fields leap on rocks and thither roll;
It looks as though the hills are with eyes endowed;
When the black stags leap and run, it is like unto
The movement in the ridged fields of buffaloes
Yoked to ploughs; here are fields watered
By little waves, linked to tracts of *Kurinji*. (1119)

43. From *Mullai* land rich in kine, a hare eyes
The hare in the moon on the mountain-top and rushes there;
Over piles of *Varaku* in fragrant *Mullai* rest clouds
Surcharged with water; thus is seen everywhere
The marriage of *Mullai* and *Kurinji*. (1120)

44. Seamen obtain from foresters partridges and quails
In exchange for their heaps of fishes; the little girls
There measure coral and pearls against country beans
And millet, of the huntresses; there is seen the blending
Of the ways of maritime *Neytal* with *Mullai*. (1121)

45. To imitate the beauteous gait of the cow-herdess
And emulate the mien of the farmwife --
Dwellers in abutting *Mullai* fragrant
And *Marutam* of long and vast fields --,
The swan and the peacock there come, fronting each other;
Thus are there the tracts of *Marutam* and *Mullai*. (1122)

46. Rolling waves wash ashore pearls which get mixed
With the flowers falling from areca spathes;
Women of *Neytal* and farmwives of *Marutam*
Whose shoulders are bamboo-like lay rival claims
To these and bear them away; thus are *Neytal* tracts
Linked close to those of *Marutam*. (1123)

47. Thus in all the fourfold regions and their ways of life
Many families thrive pursuing the callings of their clans;
They are untouched by evil, aye, even in their dream;
Pure are they; truly the glory of Tonda-Mandala is ineffable. (1124)

48. In this famous land of foison is the famous city,
Kanchi of true uberty, the wonder of the whole world.
It abides when even the cosmos comes to an end;
Such is it that it is hailed by men of all faiths. (1125)

49. In this hoary city, of yore, the Goddess hailed
Her Lord by *pooja*, and performed dharma --
Flawless and manifold --, for the redemption
Of the world; let me sing that glory and greatness
As I chance to know it. (1126)

50. Lord Siva in whose matted hair flows the leaping Ganga
Was throned in *Kailas*, the silver mountain;
He clearly explicated to Her, the Ruler of the worlds,
The true and great tenets of the *Aagamas*. (1127)

51. When the Lord graced Her with the truth that it is *Pooja*
Hailed by the innumerable *Aagamas*, which is endearing to Him,
She, the greatest of women,
The shoot as it were of great askesis,
Desired to perform *pooja* for the Lord-God. (1128)

52. Sensing Her inner desire, His bosom was filled with joy;
With a smile He asked Her: "What is it that your heart
Is after?" "O my Lord, my desire swells; I should
In the *Aagamic* way perform
Your *Pooja.*" Thus spake she,
Whose jewelled breasts are *Siva-bhoga.* (1129)

53. The Lord-God approved it and said: "By reason
Of the *tapas* wrought by the South, there came into being
An ever-during city, called *Kanchi*, easy of access to all;
There under a mango-tree are We enshrined.
There adore Us in joy in abiding *pooja.*"
When the Lord bade Her thus
She took leave of Him reluctantly. (1130)

54. The Lord fosters eighty four hundred thousand species
Of life in great mercy; she desired to hail Him
In *pooja* as is prescribed in the *Aagamas*
Graciously explicated by Him;
So She adored Him and took leave of Him;
Her father Himavant too, came to her, borne in love
With articles and attendants for *pooja.* (1131)

55. The Mother fared forth circled by many beings, celestials
And others; thus She came to *Kanchi;* thither a great snake
By name *Patuman* fell at Her feet, and wearing them as it were,
On his crown, prayed to Her: "Thou art the Mother
Of the Universe, be pleased to abide in my hole."
To this She graciously consented. (1132)

56. There for the flourishing of all the lives on earth,
Embosoming only grace which is nought but limitless joy
She desired to perform *pooja* for Him that sports
The crescent on His matted hair; He was sought everywhere;
But the great Ens would not reveal Himself;
The daughter of the auric mount, the One liana-like,
Resolved to redouble her effort so that Her great askesis
Should swell and soar beyond measure. (1133)

57. Her heart was after the Lord; her lips
Ever chanted the *Panchakshara;*
Her hands like red lotuses, folded in adoration;
She sought refuge in Him through *tapas;*
Her unique Lord could keep away no more;
Under the flawless mango-tree, He manifested
For the daughter of the mountain, to behold Him. (1134)

58. When She beheld Him, the fruit of Her great askesis,
-- Her Lord who is enshrined in *Ekampam* --,
She bowed low before Him and her bee-laden locks
Dangled low; Her desire began to soar up;
Her love grew limitless; Her goal was to hail Him
In *pooja;* this the *kovai*-lipped Uma, now commenced. 1135)

59. She stood poised in the truth of the *Aagamas*
As explicated by the God of gods, to hail Him in *pooja;*
Her natural companions who were like unto
Flowery twigs, came with flower-baskets
In soft and gentle gait, to *Ambikavanam,*
The garden where they gathered blooms,
Pure, fresh and fragrant, for the Lord. (1136)

60. They gathered manifold flowers, holy water
For ablutions secured from the great *Kampai* river,
And fragrant paste for the Lord's divine person;
Lamps fed with ghee were secured;
Holy fumigation was arranged.
These were the articles of *pooja* sought by the mind
Filled with abiding love; these were to Her
Handed over by Her attendants when she required them.
Thus, Our Mother of all the worlds, wrought Her *pooja* true
In strict conformity with the Aagamic injunctions. (1137)

61. She who is the liana-like daughter of Himavant,
She who can grant boons to lives, realised that the fruit
Of the blessed endowment of hands is to perform *Siva-pooja;*
Her heart swelled in love for the God of gods; Her great love
Expanded and grew peerless; she caused all good to flourish;
Every day she bowed Her head before Her Lord and performed
Pooja which was, for sure, approved by Him. (1138)

62. While thus She joyously and in love did *pooja* for the Lord,
He desired to play a game divine and thus bless Her
Of the lovely ear-rings; it looked as though He caused
All the seven seas to merge into one flood, overflowing
Even the heavens; thus ran the flood in the river
Kampai as He wished. (1139)

63. She whose eyes were beauteous carps, beheld the flood
Of the Lord's grace and was scared; it came
Raging and rushing, sweeping the very heavens;
Knowing it to be devastating, in loving agitation, she tried
To forfend it with her divine hands; as it was of no avail
She who is equalled by Herself alone, closely embraced
The Lord who wears the cool crescent in His crest. (1140)

64. As She, the daughter of the King of Mountains, in love
And fear, with Her hands that wore bangles, hugged close
And with Her hill-like breasts hugged tight the Lord of gods
Who manifested in the umbrage of the mango-tree,
In growing desire, the Lord that liked this game divine
Became soft and lithe in His frame, over which He had
Of yore worn the hide of a tusker wild; She whose brow
Was a bow peerless, with Her divine breasts and hands
Felt the palpable softness. (1141)

65. As He grew soft and lithe, hugged by His beloved,
Beings -- mobile and immobile --, and all species of life
Inclusive of the seven, beginning with thc celestials, melted
And with their lives and bodies fused together
Began to pray thus:
"Soft has our Lord *Ekampar* become for ever to our Lady!"
Celestials rained fresh and fragrant *Karpaka* blooms;
The *Kampai* then adored and stood denuded of its flood. (1142)

66. Fully smearing His frame with the Holy Ash -- wealth great --,
With a top-knot on His matted hair where the Ganga flows,
With chank-earrings and *rudraksha* wreath dangling,
The Lord presented a Yogi's form; but who wrought askesis?
The Primal Lord or the Universal Mother?
She graced Him with Her body's mark, and He on His body
Wore it: the impress of Her bangles and breasts. (1143)

67. The Lord showed His form of bridegroom to Her so that
The flawless and nectarean Goddess might flourish
For ever: Her breasts have softened Him sure;
He now said: "Get all the boons You seek." She bowed
At the fragrant and lotus-like ruddy feet of the Lord
-- The Originator of the Gospels --, and wanted to apprise
Him that Her flawless *pooja* unto Him
Had not yet met with termination. (1144)

68. Folding Her hands and in awesome fear, She stood
Before the God of gods and said: "You have approved
My *pooja* so far; incomplete is this day's *pooja;*
May you graciously deem it as complete!" The Lord, the Wearer
Of a flowery eye in His forehead where shine
Triple stripes of the Holy Ash, beholding the lotus-visage
Of Himavant's daughter whose locks are sought by bees,
Said: "Your *pooja* to us for ever knows no end!" (1145)

69. "My Lord, may this *pooja* endless be performed for ever
And be approved by Yourself in joy; grant me the boon
That I may in this place eternal, do all dharmas
Save the sin against Your divine feet; may all acts,
In whatsoever way performed by the dwellers here,
Be rated as great askesis and the doers, rewarded."
Thus spake She, the abolisher of embodiment. (1146)

70. When the daughter of Himavant prayed thus
To the Rider of the Bull, He came to be poised in Her *pooja;*
He also granted Her two *nazhis* of seed-paddy
That she could for all times do all dharma, therewith.
'What though they be -- high or low --,
Even the evil deeds of the dwellers of Kanchi
Will be deemed to be *tapas* leading to the true goal.'
Thus, even thus, the Lord blessed. (1147)

71. Thus endowed with inconceivably rare boons great
Our Lady there performed *pooja* to the Lord's delight;
The fruits thereof were to all entia conferred;
Prompted by mercy to bless all householders, so that
Lives linked in love may flourish well,
She abides at the holy and hallowed *Kamakkottam*
And fosters dharmas, two and thirty. (1148)

72. The Goddess *Ara-p-perum* Selvi that performs
Endless *tapas*, has for Her house divine which is
Indeed the Cosmos, a lamp of three wicks
Which attests the fruit of Her descent on earth.
Every year from a stalk bloom three blue flowers;
She abides at *Kamakkottam* that dharmas may thrive. (1149)

73. Amidst *Tiru-k-Kamakkottam* is a pool of cool water
Hailed by the triple worlds; this is like unto the ladder
Through the rungs of which Salvation can be reached
By men on this sea-girdled earth; here is water
Found at all times; sacred streams that wash away
The sins of bathers hail the glory of this pool
Known as *Ulakani*. (1150)

74. To *Tiru-k-Kamakkottam* of the Goddess who fosters lives
By Her endless performance of dharmas,
The Moon and the Sun come; but when they depart
They adhere not to their skyey way but move away
Sideways deferentially as a result of which
Directions grow contrariwise; shadows emerge
And confusion of directions reigns; this can be witnessed
By all the dwellers of this world; it is so even today. (1151)

75. In the bournes of *Kanchi*-city protected by *Kali*
Is *Tiru-p-Perumpeyarirukkai* near the bank
Of the river *Kanchi* where the Lord, the wearer
Of the crescent in His crest, abides in love; there is
Uberous *Kanchitthanam* whose shadow parts not
From it, whether the sun fiercely rises aloft
Or sinks into the western main. (1152)

76. The Vedas hail Him here; rare *tapas* is wrought here;
Anchored in unalterable righteousness, here perform
Munis, pooja; all beings beginning with the *Devas*
In sheer love that overflows, adore Him in *pooja;*
The Lord grants to each his heart-felt desire
And here He abides in joy in shrines innumerable
Within the limits of this beauteous *Kanchi.* (1153)

77. In the precincts of the ever-abiding city divine
By reason of the greatness of the soil, a hare that lives
On shrub could chase away an elephant; such a spot
Of unabating enthusiasm is sure here; besides this
There is a place where the dead get resurrected;
Also is there a place called "The Deathless Place"
Not to be seen anywhere else on earth; such places
Are a natural sight here. (1154)

78. Here are *Punya-Tirthas* which do away
With the sins of bathers and confer on them joy only,
Ishta-Siddhi that grants the very thing wished-for,
And *Mangala-Tirthal* the conferrer of weal and welfare;
Also are *Tirthas* by the celestials protected
And *Sarva-Tirthai* which is a confluence
Of all the holy waters of the triple worlds; in sooth
There are innumerable *Tirthas* in that city
Where for ever the celestials bathe. (1155)

79. There is the golden spot where on a single stalk
Three lotuses bloom; there is also the place where
The flooding river runs westward and sudden
Disappears; there during the live-long day
The red-lily blooms; fresh lotus blooms at night;
At noon blossoms *patiri;* then again there is
The sleepless, fruitless tamarind tree which is
Of the hue of the divine Mother who is like a rain-cloud. (1156)

80. There is a well which conceals into itself
The shadow of its beholder; there is a well
Whose water is venomous: a little of it will end life;
There is a subterranean passage which confers
On any entrant a simian form; there is
Also a cenote which cancels this similitude;
There is a place for the commingling in joy
Of mortals with immortals; like these are
Many marvels in this city of wonders. (1157)

81. The city is guarded by Lord Vinayaka who has
Five hands and from whom ichor floods,
Bhairava the son who zealously watching wields
The trident, whose beauteous body is like
The extending cloud at mid-night and whose
Flower-feet are decked with heroic anklets,
And also Muruka who smote the *Crowncha* Hill
Into two with His spear. (1158)

82. Many *Satthi-Yogis* triumphant and many *Siva-Yogis*
Who are unique pursuers of Siva's way and many others
Of ever-during life, abide here in many places;
Also is here a great street where Lord *Aiyanar* comes
In procession armed with *centu*, riding a tusker.
Here abide *Siddhas*, *Vidhyataras*, *Yakshas* and *Gandharvas*. (1159)

83. In that city is a place where men can see unseen;
There is a *Yoga-Pita* where gather *Siva-Yogis*
And *Yoginis*; there is also the shrine *Bhoga-Pita*
Where abides the Magna Mater willingly, and fosters
All eternal dharmas; thus in *Kanchi* where
Our Father abides in joy, are many marvels;
Who can ever con them? (1160)

84. There is *Rudra Solai*, a flowery garden frequented
By the celestials where a flame rises at night and chases
Murk away; there are men poised in the truly wise way
That does away with embodiment; there is a stone
Which will turn to gold potsherd and the like,
If they are touched by this; it is impossible
To narrate the glories of all these that thrive
In the city where the Cosmic Mother fosters
All lives established in the sixfold religion. (1161)

85. Of yore, during *Kali*-Age, a hunter apprised
Karikal Chola of the greatness of this ever-during city,
When the Chola was on an expedition to the Himalayas
Thither to inscribe his tiger signum; it was he
Who reclaimed the city to a distance of four *katams;*
He built a mountain-like fortress and caused
Many men and women dwell here. (1162)

86. The tender twigs which are flowery branches
Of cool *Kanchi* trees, dance in the wind;
The nearby mango garden where bees hum
Kanchi-p-pann, forms as it were, the fence
For the fields of *Marutam;* the city of *Kanchi*,
Strong and fierce, is girt with mighty walls
Around which runs a deep and strong moat.
Himavant's daughter wears on Her waist
Kanchi, the grace-abounding jewel that tinkles
With the sound of the Vedas; the city looks like the earth
Girt with the ever-expansive and merciful sea. (1163)

87. In the moat burgeon many water-blooms;
Goddess Parvati wears on Her *koontal* bunches
Of blooming flowers; to protect the places of *pooja*,
-- Willingly approved by the Lord Himself --, *mantras*,
Which are duly ordained by *Ekampar* in *the Aagamas*
Are made to form the fort and the moat; the moat is like
The sea which hath come there to cure itself
Of its blackness and saltiness, even as men come
To the flawless and glorious *Kanchi* to cure
Themselves of their *malas*. (1164)

88. The forted towers are lofty and enduring
Like the minds of the great that dwell there;
Through them can pass only the righteous way
That is graced by the Lord for the redemption
Of the world and nought that is evil;
They for ever glow with the growing lustre
Of the true and perfect and salvific way;
It looks as though they scale the very sky. (1165)

89. Here are the beauteous streets dight with rare mansions
Auric and peerless, long streets and commercial streets
Where manifold articles of merchandise are sold;
The city decked with these and other splendours
Is not merely this world divided by its nine continents
With the eight mountains thrown in between,
But an entirely new world of several continents;
It is a megapolis that stands apart. (1166)

90. On both sides of the streets are rows of mansions,
Lofty and large and of great lustre. Here abide
Women of soft *koontals* whence dangle
Wreaths of pearls of purest ray serene; these wreaths are
Like unto the heavenly Ganga and other streams
That pour down on earth tearing the clouds of sky
Studded with many a luminous star. (1167)

91. Many indeed are the streets dight with great mansions,
Bright with the lustre of ruddy gold; their steps
Down below are paved with sapphires; their windows
Set on the high walls are wrought of pure diamonds;
The blue steps down below are like dark *Vishnu;*
The windows above that dazzle with diamonds are like
The white Swan, *Brahma;* so it looks as though
The search after the golden *Siva*
By *Vishnu* and *Brahma* is still on. (1168)

92. The many white mansions dazzling with gems galore
Are inlaid with stones of *Chandra-Kanta* on their tops;
When the crescent of the even, from the ruddy sky
Throws its rays on them, they melt and flow streaming.
These mansions therefore are like tear-bedewed devotees
Who beholding *Ekamparar* of long matted hair
Over which rises the crescent, and who is clac
In tiger-skin, feel rapturous and melt in love. (1169)

93. Over the cloud-capped marmoreal mansions
Fly streamers; their outer surfaces mirror
All that move and are stationary;
So the city is like a treasured place where
All species of life are preserved; it is like unto
A gift of *Ekamparar* who wears on His person
The bangle-marks and the nipple-marks of *Parvati*
-- The *tapaswini* perfect --,
To *Brahma* for purposes of his creation. (1170)

94. From the balconies of mansions painted with gold,
Bow-browed belles who are like lianas,
Play with soft *kazhankus* and beauteous balls,
The while singing the glories of the Lord.
Their ornaments of gold sway as they play;
When women are enthrilled by the embraces
Of their husbands, they cast away their jewels in ecstasy;
Such pieces of jewels are gathered by maids.
Thus in this city on many days it rains gold
And sometimes gems ninefold. (1171)

95. In pavilions bathed in moonrays on the tops
Of auric mansions, fit to be called the abode
Of the Goddess of wealth, are many women
Decked with fish-like ear-pendants; they spray
The place with scented snow of *kumkum*
From gemmy sprayers, before their husbands
Would come thither; thus are encrimsoned
The black clouds which abode near cornices. (1172)

96. There are many mansions which are huge and lofty
Like snow-clad mountains; these are painted white;
Their tops are connected by flights of steps; they are
Pure and indistinguishable from the heavenly world;
Men, women and kin ascend and descend through
These steps; *Devas* and Apsaras too use these steps
For coming down; so it is hard to tell who
The celestials are, and who the human beings are. (1173)

97. In the noisy street where chariots ply, are
Many mansions; nearby is a beauteous and gemmy tower;
Near this, are emerald pials coruscating with green lustre.
Damsels that wear *kura* blooms, ascend the flight
Of steps thereto which turn roseate with the impress
Of their feet dyed with red silk-cotton; these look
Like the shoots of coral reef in a dark and billowy sea. (1174)

98. One can hear there the fierce trumpeting
Of tuskers, the neighing of chargers, the din
Of broad-wheeled chariots and the rhythm
Of ankleted feet of damsels that dance in the theatres
Of the golden streets of perpetual festivity.
The city is celestial too, in that, the trumpeting
Of *Airavata*, the neighing of the seven steeds
Yoked to the car of the divine Sun, the din
Of Brahma's great chariot, and the dancing
Movement of the ankleted feet of Apsaras
Can eke be heard there. (1175)

99. There are streets where Brahmins dwell;
From their auric mansions, streams
The sacrificial smoke through the vast streets;
Here are offered oblations to the gods on high
With chanted *mantras* which beckon them here
From the entrance-tower of *Ekamparar*
Where they had gathered to hail the Lord of gods. (1176)

100. In the broad streets where *Kshatriyas* abide,
On pials and courtyards and also in the vast yards
Weaponry is practised; in the streets where
Elephants fastened to ropes and horses are trained,
Wondrous feats of fencing and archery, are done by Princes
--The wearers of fragrant wreaths and gemmy chains --;
These are beheld by the ever-frequenting
Celestial throngs of *Vidhyataras*
From their vehicles on high and also from earth. (1177)

101. Merchants wear many jewels of dazzling gems;
Their places are full of wealth and grow in wealth;
Their thresholds are all with gems inlaid;
They are rich in beauteous gold, gems ninefold
And other heaps of wealth; *Kubera* knows the glory
Of the Lord of *Kailas* who abides in *Ekamparam*
And several other shrines there; it looks as though
The city emulates Alakapuri in many ways
So that *Kubera* can come here, have *darshan*
Of the Lord, adore Him and sojourn too. (1178)

102. In divine *Kanchi*, ever-festive, *Velalas*
Of great opulence hail from pure families;
Ekampar of dazzling matted hair and white crescent
Gifted to Himavant's daughter -- the auric liana --,
Two *nazhis* of seed-paddy, the eternal source
For all dharma; the devotee-Velalas received this
From the Magna Mater after duly hailing Her;
With this they commenced their husbandry, hailed by
The Vedas true; the yield was million-fold;
Thus they foster lives stablishing them in dharma. (1179)

103. By reason of unapproved union betwixt
The members of the four sublime *varnas*
Anulomars, *Pratilomars* and *Sankarars* get born;
These dwell in places set apart for them;
There they thrive with their kin adhering
To the calling of their race, unswervingly,
Thus they thrive and thus their habitations. (1180)

104. The streets of forted *Kanchi* hoary
Of the Primal Lord, lit with gemmy lustre,
Are full of censers and lamps
Musical instruments and streamers;
Each day is marked by a festival. (1181)

105. All thresholds are decked with festoons;
All the parts of the fortress are girt with clouds;
All houses cooled by moon's rays celebrate
Auspicious functions; all temples sought by devotees
Are thick with the celestial throngs. (1182)

106. Only the sacrifice of Brahmins is fiery;
Only flowers on *koontals* are knit together;
Only lovable streets branch out in lanes;
Only mangoes and *kurukkathis* spread abroad. (1183)

107. Waists of women alone languished;
Streamers on mansions alone waved;
Tuskers of decked foreheads alone felt nonplussed;
Trees of garden alone shook in fear. (1184)

108. Loud was the love of devotees;
Powdery was the pollen of fresh flowers;
Only gemmy chains dangled low;
Paste of *kumkum* alone flowed slow. (1185)

109. They sport like the victorious celestials;
They eternally live like *Siddha-Purushas;*
They live gaining their wish for weal;
The city is such that it grants such boons. (1186)

110. Kanchipuram presided over by the Lord who smote
The triple skyey cities, is gloried in all
The fourteen worlds; limitless is its foison;
It is a vessel of uberty, a horn of plenty. (1187)

111. He lived in a part of such divine city;
By birth he was of the clan of washermen;
His was a loving mind; he was poised in piety;
He was a hereditary servitor of the blue-throated Lord. (1188)

112. After his birth on earth, he dedicated the triad
-- Mind, speech and body --, to the Lord's feet;
As he served the servitors truly divining their intent,
He came to be known as the Divining Servitor. (1189)

113. In far-famed *Kanchi* where chariots and steeds
For ever run dinsome, he took to washing
The garments of its citizens; yet he wasn't deemed
A mere washerman; he dwelt apart in unicity;
He would cleanse the clothes of devotees who thaw in love
When they hear the name of the Lord on whose matted hair
The Ganga roars, serpents hiss and the moon shines. (1190)

114. He would wash the dirt clean from the garments
Of servitors dedicated to the Lord's dazzling lotus feet;
Even thus would he wash the triple *malas* that get
Attached to the life of twofold deeds; as thus
He cleansed the very stain of life, one day... (1191)

115. Our Lord who of yore manifested to assess the *tapas*
Of auric Himavant's daughter, the flowery liana,
To grace the devotee of devotees for his peerless devotion,
Deigned to walk the earth. (1192)

116. On a wintry day when it was exceedingly chill
As an old poor man he came to *Tiru-k-Kurippu-th-Tondar*
In the soiled habit of a great *tapaswi;*
His feet unknown to Vishnu plied in small little steps
Toward the devotee of flawless heart. (1193)

117. On His divine frame besmeared with the Holy Ash
Were dirty rags like black clouds; as He came thus,
Tiru-k-Kurippu-th-Tondar beholding him felt thrilled
And the hair on his body stood erect; he bowed
Before Him and rose up. (1194)

118. He divined the wish of Him who came there
And spake to Him sweetly and said:
"O great *tapaswi,* why is it you look so emaciated?"
He folded his hands in adoration and added:
"Be pleased to give me your cloth; I'll wash it clean."
To this, the Concealer of the blue (in His) neck, said: (1195)

119. "Though this rag be irremovably dirty, I part not
From it as my body constantly dreads chillness;
If you can return it before the sun descends
Into the western mount, you may take it and full it,
And return it to me in all celerity." (1196)

120. "Be pleased to give it to me; I'll without delay
Full it and return it to you before sunset."
When he spake thus, He said: "If you do not
Wash it, dry it and return it to me betimes this day
You have sure harmed this, my body."
So saying He gave it and went away. (1197)

121. He took it with him to cleanse it and return it
Within the specified time; he washed it clean
In the ghat rich in fragrant flowers; he then
Applied the fuller's earth to it and had it steamed;
When he desired to wash it finally, the sun was
Past meridian; then by the grace of the Lord
Who sports a fawn in His hand, it rained sudden. (1198)

122. Clouds gathered thick and filled the sky;
All the directions were involved in darkness;
The downpour was blinding; the servitor, thinking
Of his promise to the *tapaswi* rare, grew sad
And was truly bewildered. "What can I do?"
He thought and stood dazed. (1199)

123. The devotee of *Kapali* thought that the rain
That poured ceaselessly might for a while stop,
And stood apart; but the rain it rained
And would not cease; night came like a pack of foes;
"Alas, alas! I've failed in my duty to the *tapaswi*,
Great and pure, who suffers sore from chillness."
He fell down, (toppled by sorrow). (1200)

124. "The rain would not cease; the time set
By the *tapaswi* had passed; I ought to have fulled it
Betimes, taken it to my house and thither
Dried it in the wind; of this I hadn't thought at all;
I am now the cause for the harm done
To the ripe old *tapaswi*; I am a base servant;
So, this is what I should now do." Thus resolved,
He rose up ...... (1201)

125. "I'll dash my head on the granite-stone
Meant for washing and scouring clothes."
Thus he resolved and as he was about to dash
His head against it, the flowery and roseate hand
Of *Ekamparar* whose frame bears the impress
Of the bangles, jutted out from its side and stayed his head. (1202)

126. The shower of rain gave place, now to a shower of flowers;
The Lord that wears on His crown the honied chaplet
Of *konrai* blooms, appeared on His mount, the Bull,
With His Consort, in the heavens; the servitor true
Melted in love and folded his hands in worship
And stood apart. (1203)

127. The triple-eyed Lord beheld him that stood
Before Him and said: "We have, to the triple worlds,
Demonstrated your state; may you henceforth
Abide for ever in Our eternal world."
Thus He graced him and then from there
He disappeared into the shrine of *Ekamparam*. (1204)

128. Thus hailing the eternal glory of the service
Of *Tiru-k-Kurippu-th-Tondar*, I now proceed
To narrate the act of him who cut off the feet
Of his father, that the world might thrive well.
As true servitors hail the Lord as one demented,
Who can ever unfold the truth of this mystique? (1205)

Stanza	Line		
4	4-7	When of yore, mutiny broke out in Malai Nadu, many fled from that country. Of them was a young girl who took refuge in a Velala family of Tondai Mandala. The Velalas reared her as they would, their own daughter. When peace was restored in Malai Nadu the kin of that girl came to take her back. The Velalas then said that the girl had become their own daughter and claimed the right to perform her wedding. They celebrated her marriage and sent her back with dowry and all. Since that time came to be established the relationship, hailed in this stanza.	
	7	(Itai) is Karamani which according to Winslow is "a kind of lentil or pulse". Iral is a shrimp; a prawn; cancer serratus.	
	8	Kandal	: The fragrant screw-pine.
10	3	Mullai	: Jasmine.
	5	Maruda tree	: Arjuna.
	6	Neytal flower	: 1. White Indian water-lily. 2. Blue nelumbo.
13	4	The beatitude sought by the celestials is this. As Devas, they could come here only in an invisible form and hail the Lord. This fugitive joy would not do. So they prayed for the boon of adoring the Lord in unicity, embodied as human beings.	

15 Neeli : Durga

5 Every region is endowed with a twyfold time, called the major and the minor. Major time refers to the season and minor to a division of the day.

19 Tiruooral is Kalikai.

21 Surabi : The Cow of plenty also known as Kamadenu.

89 Nine continents : Bharata, Kimpurusha, Harivarsha, Illavruta, Iramiya, Hiranya, Guru, Ketumalaka and Bhathrasuva.

Eight mountains : Himalaya, Hema, Nishada, Neela, Sweta, Sringa Ghandamana and Malyavan.

106 Each line in this poem is a pun.

Teeya = (1) *fiery* (2) *evil*; *Pini* = (1) *knit* (2) *disease*; *Kavalai* = (1) *worry* (2) lane; Puram soozha = (1) spread abroad (2) back-bite.

107. The whole poem is woven with puns. The first line says that in Kanchi, nothing languishes save the woman's waist. A slender waist is always described as languishing. The second line says that in that city no one is of a wavering type. That which wave(r)s is the streamer only. Thikaiappana in line 3 means: 1. are nonplussed; (2) are situate in the directions. Payam (bhaya) in line 4 means (1) fear and (2) fruit.

25. The Purana of Chandesura Nayanar

"He truly hailed the Lord in *pooja;* when his father
Grew wroth at this he cut off his feet
With an axe; he is motherly Chandi
Devoted to the hallowed feet of the Lord;
I am a servitor of this lord."

- The *Tiru-th-Tonda-th-Tokai*

1. In the Chola-land fed by the cool Kaveri never-failing,
On the southern bank of *Manni* river is the hoary town
Of great foison called Seignaloor, designed by the grace
Of Lord Muruka who smote Mt. Crowncha into two
And who was to vanquish the fierce and hostile *Soora;*
This was densely inhabited by Brahmins versed in the Vedas. (1206)

2. They were oned in the way of the Holy Ash; they were
Of two-fold birth; they tended the triple fire;
They cultivated the four Vedas; them followed
Their senses five; sextuple were their duties;
All the seven worlds hailed them; with such men throve the town. (1207)

3. The students of the Vedas, the wearers of the sacred thread
To which was tied a flawless piece of deerskin,
Had tufts of hair; such groups were found with
Their preceptors and so were they like the stars and the moon;
From the *matams* over the tops of which rested clouds
The Vedas resounded. (1208)

4. The town was rich in *Yupa* columns on which
Could abide the carriers of spreading wings
Of *Vishnu* and *Brahma*, who came thither to receive
The havis due to them, offered by the Brahmins
In the halls of sacrifice; onto a *Yupa* column
Could be fastened the mount of Indra. (1209)

5. The town was rich in long streets through which passed
Homa-cows from whose udders sweet milk issued;
Students of the Vedas who collected *samita*-sticks,
Recited the Vedas as they returned home; the women
Of Brahmin houses bathed in pools full of flowers
And homeward plied their steps. (1210)

6. Spacious halls of sacrifice were situate nearby on the bank
Of *Manni* river whose waves shored up pearls;
The chariots of the high-priests of sacrifices and those
Of the celestials, were in the open place
Stationed close to each other. (1211)

7. Rich was the growth of red lilies near sluices;
Sheaves of paddy grew thick in the watery fields;
Nearby were areca trees and bees hummed over their spathes;
In long-leaved lotus-blooms carps slumbered;
Over pathways *mullai* creepers spread and formed bowers;
Kanchi trees with twigs full of buds were everywhere. (1212)

8. The *Chola* monarchs variously called *Senni*
Abhaya and *Kulottungka Chola* form the lineage
Of the valiant hero, *Anabhaya* who roofed
Tillai-Ambalam with gold; this town is one
Of the five seats where a *Chola*-prince could be coronated. (1213)

9. Happy hymnody is the fruit of goodly melody;
Nectarean taste marks the milk, and growing lustre, the eyes;
The guerdon of contemplation is the *Panchakshara;*
The rains are a gift of the heavens;
Saivism is the fruit of the Vedas;
Even so, this town is earth's own fruit;
Can ever words articulate the glory of its bounty? (1214)

10. In that gloried town was a leading Brahmin family
Of *Kasyapa-gotra*, poised in household dharmas;
Like a snake which gives the gem rare and the poison too,
Yeccha Dhatta, an incarnation of deeds,
-- Good and evil --, sprang from them. (1215)

11. His wife divine hailed from a fitting family;
She ran the house attending well to the kith and kin;
She had of yore, wrought askesis, to come by a son
Who would prove to be uniquely helpful;
She was to be blessed with the greatest beatitude
That sons on earth can ever confer; she had snapped
All fetters and was solely attached to the Lord only;
She was pure and immaculate. (1216)

12. Of such good parents, he, *Vichara Sarma* came to be born
That the ways of the Vedas might shine in splendour,
That the clan of Brahmins might increase and multiply,
That all the seven worlds might stand redeemed,
That the truth of Saivism of the Dancing Lord might grow for ever
And the triumph of *tapaswis* might blaze very well. (1217)

13. When he was five summers old, he became
Well-versed in the *Sivagamas* and the metrical Vedas
Which were granted in grace by the Lord,
And also the six *angas* of the Vedas,
By reason of his noetic nexus of yore; his mind,
Like a bud full grown into a bloom breathing fragrance,
Blossomed, endowed with an exquisite mellowness. (1218)

14. When he was seven years old, his father invested him
With the glorious sacred thread at a peerless function;
Though he was blessed with the wisdom of all the good works,
In keeping with the tradition great, his parents
Had him initiated in the cultivation of the Vedas. (1219)

15. Beholding his intellectual achievement, which had,
-- All unschooled --, comprehended the Vedas
And all the arts which confer enlightenment,
His preceptors wondered at him; the little one supremely great
Knew pellucidly in his firm-set mind
That the Dancing feet of the Lord are the ultimate goal
Of all the endless arts and sciences. (1220)

16. "The Dancing Lord of roseate feet owns us" is the truth
Which forthwith dawned on him whenever he began to ponder;
This for ever upsurged in him; love in him ever soared
Devotion became a sweet duty with him; in this
He stood firm-poised. While thus he throve, one day.... (1221)

17. When he proceeded with the learners of the Vedas
Who went alongside the kine of the townsfolk,
As a newly-calved cow was about to charge its neatherd
He beat it black and blue with a stick and without
Any qualms of conscience; he beheld this;
Love-borne he castigated him in wrath and prevented
Him from his act; his knowledge of truth began to upsurge. (1222)

18. Through arts multifoliate, the *Agamas*, of great immensity
And the rare and glorious Vedas poised in truth,
He knew clearly all about the phenomena;
Informed by a mind of such lucidity, he knew
Precisely and full well all about cows;
(So) *Vichara Sarma* desired to bless the cowherd. (1223)

19. "By birth, they are superior to all the species of life;
In them swell for ever all the holy streams;
Aren't glorious *Devas* and throngs of saints
The very limbs inseparable of the goodly cows? (1224)

20. "By reason of their greatness, even on the day
When they calve, they are entitled to provide
For the Lord-Dancer of *Tiru Ambalam*, whose crest
Is decked with the crescent and the Ganga, and who wears
A garland of laughing skulls,
Panchakavya, for His divine ablutions. (1225)

21. "The blue-throated Lord is the Primordial Cause
And He sustains for ever all the worlds, inclusive
Of the celebrated *Devas*; the Lord-Dancer of ruddy
Matted hair wears the Holy Ash, the source of which
Is indeed the cows, the truthful idols of glory.
So, is there any limit to their greatness? (1226)

22. "Should one think more to augment their glory?
The Lord sports the young of a leaping fawn in His hand;
On His matted hair the Ganga washes clean the gems
That issue from serpents, His jewels;
Both He and His Consort, the Goddess of the celestials,
Ride the angry Bull which is but *Vishnu*.
Are not kine of the clan of this great *Rishaba-Deva?*" (1227)

23. Thus he thought in manifold ways and thus
He concluded: "There is no duty superior to that
Of grazing and fostering the kine with their calves
In the proper and pleasing way; this indeed is the way
To hail the feet of the Lord who dances in the *Ambalam.*"
Then addressing the neatherd he said: "Refrain
From grazing the kine henceforth. *(1228)*

24. "I'll myself henceforth graze the kine" he said;
Affrighted the cow-herd bowed before him
And gave up his calling; with the leave of the Brahmins
He tended the great herds; the divine Brahmin-boy
Fostered the cows as rain would, the green crops. (1229)

25. He fared forth with the rope and the crook, and his little tuft
Waved in the wind; his sacred-thread dangled on his chest
And it was knit to a piece of deer-skin; he was
Clad in his bright *kovanam;* he daily drove the team
Afield for grazing where they had their fare aplenty;
In due time calves and milch increased. *(1230)*

26. During the season when grass grew thick
He grazed them well; he would himself pluck grass,
Feed them and thus foster them; he would rid them
Of their dread, lead them to cool fords where they could
Drink tasty water and caused them to rest under
Leafy umbrage; when it was time for nectarean milking
He would drive them to the doors of their owners. (1231)

27. On the banks of the *Manni* and abutting the pasture land,
And nigh unto the beds of that river, and also
On the gardens of *Maruta* realm where pearls abound,
He would graze the increasing herds, collect *samita*-sticks
And also sticks of *Arani* and would return before night;
For many a goodly day this was his routine. (1232)

28. During those days, the herds of kine grew beauteous
And increased; as with sweet grass and tasty water
They were fed full, they were happy in their mind;
This caused the swelling of their udders
With milk pure and sweet, whence it suffused day and night. (1233)

29. The homa-cows which helped the Brahmins conduct
Their sacrifices, grew more and more beauteous;
Their yield of milk was multifold; the Brahmins were
Therefore happy that it was thus as the *Brahmmachari*
Tended the kine with such loving care. (1234)

30. The kine too were happy beyond measure;
Though they were parted from their calves
When they beheld him -- the calf of the Gospels --,
They neared him and melted in motherly love for him;
They bellowed in joy and withouten the tug of teats
From their udders, milk suffused profuse. (1235)

31. He grew glad that the cows rained milk
Even when none milked them; his mind
Poised in virtue divined from this an inkling
About the sacred ablutions for the Lord;
He, our patron, pondered over this and stood clarified;
He was impelled by a penchant to perform *pooja* for Siva. (1236)

32. His desire to perform *pooja*, though a child's, was but
A continuum of his pious act of the past births;
In sweeling love, on the sand-dune of the *Manni*,
Under the spreading *Atthi* he wrought a *Sivalinga*
-- The formless form of the Rider of the red-eyed Bull --,
Of pure sand; he also built a temple with tower
Prakaram and all. (1237)

33. Flowers of *Atthi*, tender shoots and choice flowers
From the nearby gardens which he himself gathered
As fitting adornment for the holy crown of the pious Lord,
Were kept by him in a basket woven of fresh leaves
That their rich odour may be kept intact. (1238)

34. He went in for the fine *kumbhas* and secured them;
The kine were grazing in the gardens and the hinterland
Between the river; thither he went and when he touched
A teat, the cow bellowed and showered milk. (1239)

35. He gathered the milk in pots and came back with them;
He had them consecrated in the sandy shrine
Of the Lord of gods; with flowers and tender shoots
Buzzed over by bees, he duly and in accordance with
The *sastras*, did *pooja*, impelled by a trans-embodimental love
And with milk performed the Lord's holy ablutions. (1240)

36. Again and again he bathed Him in white milk;
The Ruler (of souls) came to be enshrined in the love
Of His devotee; as the love grew into passion divine
And pervaded the orb of *Sivalinga*, the Lord approved
The devotee's *pooja* who beheld Him only and no sandy ikon. (1241)

37. The gloried Son of *Seignaloor*, by dint
Of his thought of at-one-ment, could leaven with his love
Whatever was lacking and could not be secured
By him for the hierurgy, of the ablutions and the like;
Thus he completed his *pooja*, paid obeisance and felt happy. (1242)

38. Nathless their supply of pots and pots of milk
To the Brahmin-boy who performed with it
The sacred ablutions of the Lord's feet, the cows
Were uberous and their plentiful udders yielded milk
As before; so the Brahmins suffered no lack at all. (1243)

39. Thus as a game divine, the wearer of the sacred-thread
Did this for many a day; a man who was
Unaware of the true greatness of this service
Apprised the Brahmins of the town of the happening. (1244)

40. Hearing him, the Brahmins of the rare Vedas said:
"He said the cowherd did not know how to tend them
And so he would do it; thus he came to be in charge
Of the herds; now he milks them and plays false;
Call the boy's father to whom we'll report." Thus they. (1245)

41. The Brahmins who stood there, proceeded
To his father's house and called him; when he came
The assembly spake to him thus: "Hearken to the evil
Your son does in the guise of grazing the cows of townsmen."
Thus they began their narration. (1246)

42. "The cows meant to supply milk for the sacrifices
Of the Brahmins, are in love driven by your son
To the pasture, as if he would graze them.
On the bank of the *Manni* river rich in fragrant flowers
He milks them, pours it on earth and does all
That pleases his fancy; thus we are told." (1247)

43. When the Brahmins spoke thus, struck with fear
He said: "Not a whit of this was known to me so far;
O Brahmins of absolute glory! Forgive the past evil."
Thus he implored them and prayerfully added:
"If this deed repeats, I'll hold myself guilty." (1248)

44. He took leave of the Brahmins, performed the rites
Of the evening and went into his house;
He pondered over the stigma;
He would not discuss it with his son; he chose
To verify it himself; the night passed away and when
His son went forth to graze the cows, the one grown ripe
In the mastery of the Vedas, shadowed his son. (1249)

45. To graze all the herds of cows of that town that day
In the fragrant pasture on the bank of the *Manni* river
The sacred son gathered them there;
The father saw this and to watch
The further happenings he climbed a *kura* tree
And thither concealed his person. (1250)

46. The loving *Brahmmachari* first had his holy bath;
Then as before he built with sand the temple;
He gathered fresh buds and blooms; then the pots into which
The cows poured their milk, were set in order;
He also attended to the other requisites. (1251)

47. He then commenced the rare *pooja* in accordance
With the rules of the *Agama* and with his soul oned in truth;
The fragrant buds and blooms he placed on the crown
Of the Lord-Ruler and hailed Him with *mantras;*
With flowing love he poured sweet milk as ablutions. (1252)

48. Higher and higher spiralled his love; it was time
For the effort of his hoary deeds to fructify;
It looked as though the very grace of the Lord,
The Wearer of serpents, the One of matted hair --,
Was out to reveal the glory of the lofty one,
By incensing him and throwing him into bewilderment;
The old Brahmin on the *Kura* tree beheld it all in utter wrath. (1253)

49. When he beheld this, down he descended quick
From the tree and with a stick beat his son
On his sacred back besides hurling vile obloquy on him;
As the serving devotee, the little one of supreme excellence,
Was linked to the Lord in *pooja* and in love profound,
He was oblivious of all other happenings. (1254)

50. The angry man beat him again and again;
But the great one wasn't even aware of it; he went on
With his service of the sacred ablutions without let;
Beholding this, the semi-mad Brahmin grew more angry
And kicked away the divine ablutionary milk-pot;
Lo, base had he become like his base act. (1255)

51. As he thus spilt it away the holy child looked at him
For a while and knew the evil one to be his own father;
Yet as he spilt the milk consecrated for the Lord
He was out to punish him; he took a stick
Which lay nearby, and behold, it duly became
An axe in his hand; with that when he cut away
His feet, down fell the Brahmin, on the earth. (1256)

52. The wielded axe served as the weapon to quell
The contretemps that beset the holy *pooja*;.
The son that chopped away both the feet
Of his father that tried to obstruct the *pooja*,
With the obstruction gone, proceeded with his *pooja*;
Then the Lord of flowing matted hair and His Consort
Appeared on their mount, the Bull. (1257)

53. Bhoota-hosts came encircling the Lord;
Ancient *munis* and *Devas* chanting the Vedas
Hailed the Lord; lo, the Lord of pure perfection
Manifested by reason of His sheer grace and mercy;
The tender boy ripe in devotion, beheld Him,
Adored Him and with a delighted heart
Fell prostrate at His lotus-feet. (1258)

54. The Lord decked with a wreath of *konrai* blooms
Lifted him that fell at the shade of His feet twain,
And said: "For Our sake you felled down your own father;
We are your Father henceforth." Thus He graced him
And embraced him, felt him with His hand
And kissed his head in delight great. (1259)

55. The body of the divine child thus touched and felt
By the flowery hand of the Lord of the red-eyed Bull
Was transmuted into immeasurable *Sivamayam;*
He was immersed in the divine grace of the Lord;
He shone with Siva's own lustre, hailed by the one
Throned on lotus and also the great celestials. (1260)

56. The God of gods made him the Lord of Devotees;
He said: "We confer on you the beatitude of Chandesa;
Our *Nirmalya* -- food, garment and wreath --,
Shall all be yours only." Thus saying, the Lord
From off his matted hair where shines the crescent,
Took out a wreath of *konrai* and garlanded Him. (1261)

57. All the worlds rejoiced vociferously; showers of flowers
Poured everywhere; myriads and myriads
Of *Sivagana-Natas* sang and danced in sheer delight;
The Vedas of divine words, chanting hailed;
Throve loftily the way of Saivism; thus our lord,
Adoring the Lord was installed in his beatific office. (1262)

58. He had wrought sin known the world over;
Yet by the grace of the Lord and by the punishment
Meted out to him through the beauteous axe
Wielded by the great Son of holy *Seignaloor,*
The old Brahmin with his kith and kin was blessed
To abide for ever in *Siva-loka* of the Primal Lord Original. (1263)

59. With the very body with which the Gospel-child
Axed away his father's feet who committed
The abominable sin, he was translated; he was made
The Son of Lord Hara; who can ever con this state?
Whatever is done by devotees to the Lord,
That is to be deemed askesis. Is it not so, even so? (1264)

in praise of Sundaramoorothy Nayanar

"I, Arooran am a servitor of the Lord of Aroor."

- The *Tiru-th-Tonda-th-Tokai.*

The glory of the servitors of the Lord
Whose beauteous throat holds the venom
Was hailed with a heart brimming with love
So that all lives might con and adore, and all worlds
Be redeemed; he sang the *Tiru-th-Tonda-th-Tokai;*
We are blessed with an embodiment to adore
His fragrant flower-feet; so we deem this birth too,
As a great beatitude. (1265)

Stanza	Line	
9		The melodic fruit is <u>pann</u> which is Raga. Hymnody is hymn-singing., cf. Psalmody.

TIRUNINRA CHARUKKAM

26. The Purana of Tirunavukkarasar

"He was stablished in salvation; Vita immortalis
Was his, He is Tirunavukkarasu;
I am a slave of his servitors."

– The *Tiru-th-Tonda-th-Tokai*

1. Behold this! I mean to historicise the glorious life
Of Tirunavukkarasu ever poised in truth,
Also called Vakeesar, the *tapaswi* of Godlv wisdom
Who lived that the world might flourish
By the ever-growing servitorship to the Lord,
Little realising that there is no tongue in the great world
That can even attempt to articulate it. (1266)

2. There in the fecund land of Tirumunaippadi
Are lofty bejewelled buildings on whose tops
Floats the moon; perfect are the people there;
That ancient soil is by dust alone soiled. (1267)

3. Bamboo-bred pearls of *Kurinji* region
And heaps of blossoms from *Mullai*, are borne
By it, in its billows; on either side
It feeds the fields plied with ploughshares yoked
To huge buffaloes; thus does it course, the *Pennai*,
The river majestic, enriching the land. (1268)

4. Finny fish flourish in channels; from nodes
Of canes honey pours; sheaves of grains deck
Paddy crops; areca trees are rich in bunches;
Furrowed fields are a heap of pearls;
Ponds and tanks are with lotuses damasked;
The hospitable houses smoke incense. (1269)

5. In every village when farmers cut and gather
Sweet canes, juice therefrom seeps forth;
Honey-combs built around the canes burst
And honey pours down; these two join and flow
To the buzzing of bees, and break the sluices
Even as fresh-arrived freshes; the farmers
Throw into breaches lumps of jaggery fresh-made
To keep them in good repair. (1270)

6. Plantain-bunches resemble the trunks ot tuskers;
Paddy plants, the visages of steeds; the huge carts,
The cars; the uproar of farmers, the din of infantry;
Thus is endowed every place with four-fold army. (1271)

7. Like damozels whose necks display jewels of nine gems,
Strutting about, the rows of fragrant areca trees
Wave their tops unable to bear the burden of their coiffures.
Pretty speckled bees wheel in noisy rounds;
The waters of the rising *Pennai* tossed by wind
Descend down to drench the groves and gardens. (1272)

8. Like clouds descending into the black ocean
The black buffaloes descend into tanks, to graze
Scented flowers; huge red-eyed fish big as calves,
Dash against their udders whence flows milch profuse;
As the buffaloes move and roll, the waves roll onto the shore.. (1273)

9. With circling beetles as sapphire-bangles,
Red shoots as fingers, well-grown buds as nails,
With lofty groves as hands, Lady-Earth reaches
For the Moon -- the mirror --, to behold her image. (1274)

10. Cities are girt with forts; paddy heaps mark
Grain-fragrant fields; with resplendent
Ear-pendants comely chits gather in cornices;
Thither arrive *nimbi* and peacocks fronting each other
And there they dance their merry morris. (1275)

11. It is the land where Tirunavukkarasu and Alala Sundara
Were born, and caused the sinful paths turn
Into righteous ways of blue-throated Siva.
Is it in our power to sing the glories of Tirumunaippadi,
The city par excellence in this wide and great world? (1276)

12. In this land divine, there are many cities
Of lofty greatness poised in truth and foison;
Amongst them is Tiruvamoor; it is so called, as it fosters
The divine way of *Sivam* in all the seven worlds. (1277)

13. In that hoary city nothing languishes save the waists
Of heavy-bosomed belles; their anklets alone murmur;
Their girdles only wail; cornices alone spiral up;
That which informs even the low is flawless dharma;
That which moves away is only the way of evil;
Those that close in are only families of great renown. (1278)

14. The fields do reveal lilies blue; the full moon reveals
Its dark marks; the long streets are dight
With gemmy swings rocked by men; the pre-dawn blue
Reveals the din of tillers; the jars and the vessels
In mansions huge reveal wealth untold. (1279)

15. In that exemplary city peerless flourished families
Well-established in piety and righteous conduct;
Among those virtuous *Velalas*, flourished
The flawless and hoary clan of *Kurukkai*. (1280)

16. From that clan hailed Pukazhanar, whose glory
Filled the directions eight; he was of lofty disposition,
A true scion of the clan; he was a righteous householder
Who was ever hospitable; in ever-growing glory manifold
He lived, nay, flourished with his kith and kin. (1281)

17. His wife Matiniyar hailed from a matching clan,
Equally great and matchless; in due time she bore
A daughter fair known as Tilakavatiyar,
The equal of Lakshmi in beauty and virtue. (1282)

18. A few years later -- a praise-worthy pause --,
For the flourishing of the limitless scriptures
And the saintly way, like the Sun the dispeller
Of world's murk, Marulneekkiyar made his *avatar*
To chase the inner murk of souls away. (1283)

19. After the birth of the beloved son ever-glorious, Pukazhanar
Duly performed all the auspicious rites in great splendour;
His kith and kin showered presents on the child in joy;
Thus fostered, the babe crossed his infancy. (1284)

20. The ceremony of tonsure was done to Marulneekkiyar
To the great delight of a great many wise men;
Then people were plied with gifts which flowed like floods;
This done, he was initiated into the art of instruction
Which by enlightenment uncoils the coiled *manam*. (1285)

21. The father was steeped in delight and joy
As the son with intellect fully-blown
Mastered all the variform arts with ease
Thanks also to his pre-natal knowledge.
With wisdom full, the son shone a spotless moon. (1286)

22. Tilakavathiyar was then twelve summers old;
& Great men as messengers came forth, seeking
23. Her hand for Kalippakaiyar, the scion true
And leader of Velala clan of equal renown,
And also a great devotee of the Lord
Whose matted hair is red as lightning bright;
He was a great warrior of the crowned monarch,
A heroic lion in the field of war,
And a handsome hero, liberal and well-renowned. (1287) & (1288)

24. The great men duly broached the subject
Announcing the purpose of their coming.
The families, the clans and their traits were
Discussed in great frankness; then flawless Pukazhanar
Of great glory was pleased to accord his consent
For the wedding of his lovely daughter of fair hips. (1289)

25. The consent of the virgin's father was duly
To Kalippakaiyar conveyed; ere the wedding
Could take place, an invasion by Northerners
Took place; the ruler of the realm sent
For Kalippakaiyar, to rout the foes in the war. (1290)

26. Taking leave, he fared forth with his army
To give battle to the terrible foes;
After a few days' journey he met in all fury
The fierce foemen and fought against them;
He swam for long in the cruel main of war. (1291)

27. Whilst he was thus engaged, Pukazhanar
Of noble lineage, the father of the heavenly damsel,
As happens in this, the mutable world
By *Karma*, fell fatally ill and eventually
Departed for the heavenly world. (1292)

28. As he thus passed away, his noble wife
Matiniyar deeming her kin and children too
As nought of worth -- for her they were then less than dirt --,
Resolved to follow her lord, and by chaste suttee
Came by this beatitude. (1293)

29. After the death of the parents who gave birth to them,
Beauteous Tilakavatiyar and her brother,
The beloved Marulneekkiyar, stood bewildered by worry;
With their kinsfolk they were plunged in deep despair. (1294)

30. Consoled somewhat by the near kinsmen
And retrieved a trifle, from sorrowing,
They performed the obsequies for the departed souls;
Kalippakaiyar who fought for his monarch
Lost his life in the battle-field and gained Valhalla. (1295)

31. Word passed round that Kalippakaiyar who quelled
The foes in the field of battle at the king's behest,
Had died in battle; she who was like unto Lakshmi
Throned on red lotus -- Tilakavatiyar --, heard this. (1296)

32. "My father and mother had meant to wed me
To him; I am his by right; I'll therefore
Link this life with his." As she resolved thus
Marulneekkiyar fell down at her feet (1297)

33. And much wailing said: "Even after the death
Of mother and father if I live, it is because
I am blessed to adore you every day; forsaking me
If you mean to depart, I'll surely pre-decease you."
Thus he spake in grief immersed. (1298)

34. "Live he must, the brother younger" she resolved
And it was pure mercy which thus compelled her will;
She sought not the ethereal world; she that would not
Bear the beauteous golden sacred cord, bore merely her life;
Thus she bore love benign for all beings that breathed;
Tilakavatiyar remained indoors poised in sheer askesis. (1299)

35. The misery of him whose mind is spotless, thus ended;
He grew to be a lad and realised even then
The impermanence of the ways of the world;
He dispensed wealth and gained glory on earth;
Impelled by mercy he stablished very many alms-houses
And also set up water-booths. (1300)

36. He reared gardens; pools and ponds he dug up;
He gave freely and with joy to those poised in piety;
He fed strangers; on pundits he showered gifts
And caused them increase; thus he practised
Charity indispensable for all that dwell on earth. (1301)

37. He knew well the mutability of the world.
"I will not in this impermanence get involved."
Thus he resolved and totally renounced;
As the Lord had not yet blessed him with the knowledge
Of the ways of religions, he joined Jainism which throve
Lurking under the umbrage of the doctrine of non-killing. (1302)

38. To Pataliputra he repaired and found
His way into the assembly of the Jains;
Him the sly Jains strong in chicanery
Surrounded, and lulled him into thinking
That 'the way to liberation was here',
By deft glimpses projected bright as truth, but all false;
These they did to win him over to their fold. (1303)

39. To the study of all Jain works rare and great
He applied himself, heart and soul, and thus
Became in due time their supreme exponent;
The nude fraternity of the fat Jains, was
Over-joyed at his superiority and conferred
On him the title "Dharmasena par excellence." (1304)

40. With his mastery of Samana doctrines
And easy valiancy in disputation,
He vanquished the Buddhists who knew not
Aught about Chittha, the inner sensorium;
Thus he shone in splendour as the greatest Jain. (1305)

41. Whilst he flourished as a Jain eminent,
Tilakavatiyar firm-rooted in the ancient way of *tapas*
To snap all nexus with kith and kin, resolved to tread
The pure way of the Lord's and took to the adoration
Of the Lord's hallowed feet. (1306)

42. The matron who in love willed to free herself
From the ever-binding *pasa*, repaired
To Tiruvatikai Veerattanam -- great, glorious
And stablished in grace --, on the northern bank
Of the divine Gedilam. (1307)

43. She hailed the Lord there, very like a hill
Of incarnadine coral; from that day
She wore the marks of Saivism and with longing
Plied her hands in divine deeds of service. (1308)

44. Before day-break she would sweep clean the yard
And with blemishless cow-dung do the coating;
Flowers she would gather and weave them
Into wreaths and garlands; good many were her services
And the servitors of the Lord greatly admired them. (1309)

45. Whilst thus every day she served and adored humbly
The Lord in ever-growing love, her heart was
Aching for her brother fallen
Into the alien fold by reason of (his) evil past. (1310)

46. Tilakavatiyar, the *tapas*-inducing light,
Would worship the ever-effulgent Light,
And pray thus: "If you deign to redeem me
You should lift my brother from the pit
Of perdition." Thus she prayed for days without number. (1311)

47. "With mats for their habit, they pluck their hair,
And eat standing, thinking these to be *tapas;*
He fell among these; him let Your mercy
Retrieve." Thus when Tilakavatiyar who had
Her being in Siva, prayed, the gracious Lord --
The Canceller of birth-bound deeds --, was pleased. (1312)

48. The Rider of the Bull appeared in the dream
Of the *tapaswini* and said: "Let your sorrow cease;
Your brother, of yore a saint, had wrought
Tapas to attain Me; I would now claim him
Afflicting him with a dire stomach-ache. (1313)

49. The Lord whose forehead doth an eye display
Through a stomach-ache had willed, to redeem him,
Who in his previous birth, had a little
Swerved from the path of righteous *tapas;*
Pat it burnt fierce into his bowels. (1314)

50. The fierce ache that invaded the bowels
Of Dharmasena who companied with the ungodly,
Had the combined effect
Of *Vatava*, the ever-burning ocean-flame,
Curst venom, diamond sharp and all things
Of like nature; as it coursed furrowing
Through the intestines, pain and fear seized him,
And down he fell in his cloistered room. (1315)

51. When he tried to conquer it by *mantra*,
Medicine and the like he had mastered as a Jain
The pain but increased and grieved him sore,
Aye, more and more, till he swooned as though
His brain-cells had burst owing to a snake-bite. (1316)

52. The Jains who do fettering deeds and call it *tapas*
Finding him in such plight, gathered round him
And exclaimed thus: "He ails from an unheard of ache,
Fierce and venomous; what can we do at all?"
They felt utterly undone. (1317)

53. The obdurate Jains with sore-ridden pates
Were perplexed; they chanted incantations
Over their jugs and made him drink the water thereof,
All in vain; him they caressed from head to foot
Softly with the pea-cock feathers; the ache alas
Only got exacerbated. (1318)

54. Finding the illness of Dharmasena
Of spotless fame, not a whit abating,
They cried: "What can we do alas? Cure this
We cannot." They but moved away bewildered. (1319)

55. Him the base abandoned; as the ache grew
Sharper and sharper, all forlorn, his mind
Dwelt on helpful kin; it struck him that his sister
Tilakavatiyar could succour him; he despatched
His cook to inform her of his plight. (1320)

56. He reached Tiruvatikai and espied without
The fragrant garden the saintly matron;
He worshipped her and exclaimed: "I am here
By the hest of your brother." Hearing this
She asked: "Has aught of evil him befallen?" (1321)

57. He replied: "An ache in stomach twisting
His intestines, is killing him without ending him;
He is beyond cure; they have all, aye, abandoned Him;
He desires this to be conveyed to your good self;
He seeks redemptive message from you, and has
Bidden me to come back to him under cover of night." (1322)

58. When he spake thus, she said: "Never would I
Go forth with you to the assembly of Jains
That knows nought of goodness; go, tell him so."
Thus told, he returned and reported to him
What Tilakavatiyar said, verbatim. (1323)

59. When he heard the report, he cried: "What am I
To do for this?" Now came the time when grace of God
Was to visit him; he said: "To end this endless misery
I'll give up this base religion and hold fast
To the feet of Tilakavatiyar poised in the pious way." (1324)

60. When thus the redemptive thought rose up in him
He chose to implement it; bewilderment then quit him;
He threw away his garment of mat, sling-borne jug
And the bunch of peacock-feathers; up he rose and moved away. (1325)

61. To quit the false Jains for good and to reach
The goodly path of Him of Truth absolute,
He wound himself with a cloak of pure white,
And leaning on them that would help him walk,
Left for Tiruvatikai, the city of saints, by night unseen. (1326)

62. With the burning ache wheeling its singeing course
In his stomach, led on by a welling-up desire great,
Plodding his weary way he reached the divine *matam*
Of Tilakavatiyar, that stood fronting
The rock-like fort-wall of Tiruvatikai. (1327)

63. The very moment he came there, down he fell
At the feet of Tilakavatiyar and spake thus:
"You are the crown of our clan's askesis!
The inexorable ache hath driven me to you;
Pray, bless me with the word that will end my bewilderment
And help me reach the shore of salvation." (1328)

64. Looking at the grieving brother who lay
At her feet, her thought alighted on God's grace;
With folded hands she adored Him and said:
"You did sure wallow in the alien pit
Of vile irreligion, suffering much; RISE!" (1329)

65. Marulneekkiyar who heard the blessed word,
Rose up in fear, still in the grip of the vile ache
And adored her; the great *tapaswini* said:
"Know this to be of the grace of the Lord of matted hair;
He cuts the bonds of those who attain His feet;
Adore Him and render service." Thus she bade him. (1330)

66. Meekly did he submit to her command
And adored her; the *tapaswini* invoked
The grace great of the immaculate Lord
To make him fit to enter *Tiruveerattam;*
She chanted the *Panchakshara* and gave him
The holy ash of the Lord of Mount *Kailas.* (1331)

67. Tilakavatiyar graced him with the holy ash
Of the Lord, the Grantor of eternal life;
The great one bowed low and received it, convinced
That *magna vita* was hereafter his; he applied it
On his person as ordained, and followed her, his redeemer. (1332)

68. At the hour of pre-dawn divine which did away
With the inner murk of his who wore the sacred ash
And the inky darkness of the night,
The humble *tapaswini* with broom, cow-dung and pot,
All holy --, entered the temple of the Lord --
The Wearer of coursing river in His crown --,
Leading him that sought in her the palladium. (1333)

69. Adoring the great temple of Veerattam
On the bank of the billowy Gedilam, wherein is
Enshrined the Lord whose bow is the Mount Meru,
He circumambulated it; when in adoration deep
He fell prostrate, he was blessed
With an easy valiancy to weave garlands of psalms (1334)
Fit for the Lord.

70. With his body smeared with the holy ash
And his God-loving mind filled with increasing devotion,
To have his disease and delusion destroyed, he hymned
The Lord-Brahmin who burnt the triple cities of foes;
His divine decad of hymns oped thus:
"You haven't destroyed the death-like (disease so far)."
This flawless decad sublime, he sang fronting the Lord
That the sorrows of all the seven worlds might get wiped out. (1335)

71. When he completed the deathless decad
The cruel ache kind that grieved him sore
Instantaneously quit him for good.
The ache he thought, in truth, did confer on him
Life and Grace; blessed now with the grace of the Lord
That hath his dwelling in the righteous heart,
He stood immersed in the sea of God's mercy
With the clear wisdom of blissful beatitude. (1336)

72. All the hair on his body stood erect in thrill great;
Tears of joy from his eyes poured down;
He rolled on earth ecstatically and cried:
"Self-willed I sinned and fell down but the flood
Of Your grace bore me aloft and conveyed me
To safety, otherwise inaccessible to poor me;
Do I merit this?" Thoughts as these welled up
In him and flowed out as prayers. (1337)

73. "I wallowed in the alien fold of Jainism
Which breeds falsehoods disguised as truth;
Long did I lie immersed in the horrible pit
Companying with the intolerant Jains
Doing deeds of perdition; how can I ever hope
To discharge my debt of gratitude
To the ache of stomach which set me
On the path leading to the Lord's feet
Whose consort, of perfumed locks, is the daughter
Of great Himavant?" Thus he hailed it. (1338)

74. At this fitting hour, by the glorious grace of the Lord
Of Veerattam, an unbodied voice from the cloudy sky,
To the hearing of all that stood marvelling, spake thus:
"As you have in tuneful harmony of Tamil's majesty, sung
The ambrosial decad, a rich wreath of word-blossoms,
Your goodly name will in all the seven worlds be
Endearingly known as "Navukkarasu." (1339)

75. As it thus happened to him, the lord of language
Thought: "Do I merit this great beatitude?
Even I, who for long was by an evil mind possessed?"
He then thought of the Lord's great grace to Ravana
Who like him, not witting the glory of God
Blasphemed Him and sinned; as he was by the Lord
In a like manner blessed, he resolved to praise that very grace
And ever hail it in humble worship. (1340)

76. "Thus graced by the adorable and merciful Lord
Arasu has hither come, that the way of Jains
Who pluck their hair (as practitioners of religion)
May perish and the world flourish." So spake the servitors
Gathering everywhere; Tiruvatikai, full of such devotees
With the music of drum, *tampatta*, *tudi*,
Matthala, *yazh*, *kilai*, *tuntupi* and *mani*
And with rows of resounding conches, roared like a sea. (1341)

77. Having quit the confounding path, Vakeesar felt
Marked by delight great; to render service divine
With body, mind and word, he wore the marks
Of Saivism; godly consciousness pervaded him;
Endless holy hymns streamed from his lips;
Uzhavaram decked his hand; thus he stood
Poised in manual service with a melting heart. (1342)

78. By reason of her love to render true service to the peerless Lord
Of the celestials, her longing for the Lord's ankleted feet
Met with fruition; the *tapaswini* of that hallowed town
Was granted the boon she sought; she hailed the Lord thus:
'Who was ever blessed with the loving-kindness like unto that
With which the Lord had blessed us? He deemed even me
As worthy, and cured my brother at once
Of his false religion and malady." (1343)

79. The Jains of the hoary city of Pataliputra
That only performed base deeds, heard
Of his relief from misery and his attainment
Of abounding grace and also the Saivite path;
This they could not stomach at all. (1344)

80. "As the stomach-ache of Dharmasena could be
Cured by no one here, seeking succour, he left us;
Now a great Saivite, he stands freed of his malady;
Our great and proper religion has fallen, for sure."
Thus they spake bewildered. (1345)

81. They grieved sore that Jainism which was by him
Firm established by the conquest of contending religions,
Had met with its annihilation; they that claimed
That they would never kill or utter falsehood,
But did only evil deeds, with their peacock-feathers
And heads hanging low, assembled in secrecy. (1346)

82. Thus gathered many Jains in misery.
"Should the king come to know of the true happening
He would grow wroth, himself become a Saivite
And make us jobless; what shall we do now?"
Thus on deliberate deception they turned their thoughts. (1347)

83. "As his elder sister thrives in Saivism,
Dharmasena, under the false pretext
Of an uncured ache of stomach, went thither
Causing damage hither, forsaking and blaspheming
Our faith; thus let us report." So they settled it clearly. (1348)

84. The evil-minded resolved to do as agreed upon.
"We will fare forth first to report to the King."
Thus they, and in this attempt they gathered
Like the powers of darkness, and came
To the city of the Pallava-King. (1349)

85. The nude crowd that eats standing and in silence,
Arriving at the palace-gate told the ostiary thus:
"Inform the king of our gathered arrival."
The porter awaited the opportune hour,
Then went in to inform thus the king. (1350)

86. "All the servitors, wasted in grief, have come, and are
At the palace-gate where the pennant flutters from its mast.
Thus informed, as the king, the wielder of a sharp spear,
Was of their faith, besieged by worry, spake thus:
"What may the reason be that they hasten here in their strength?" (1351)

87. The porters showed them in and the peripatetics
Came to the presence of the king and unfolded thus
Their fabrication to him: "Our leader Dharmasena
Under the pretext of stomach-ailment had ditched us
And become a servitor of the God of matted hair;
He had forsworn our faith." (1352)

88. The Pallava of fragrant wreath, grew wroth excessively
And said: "Prompted by a blame-worthy mind,
Under the guise of a chimerical malady, could he
Ditch our great and glorious faith? O ye of endless *tapas!*
What should be done for this?" Thus he, in anger. (1353)

89. "He had played false to the lofty and sublime religion;
He had thus harmed your hoary way well-established;
Put him to torture." Thus they spake by fear untouched;
Even thus they spake, the base sinners who professed
Non-killing but ever trod the false way. (1354)

90. The king deemed delusion to be wisdom; he was
Bereft of mercy; he spake thus to his ministers:
"Apprehend the evil one about whom these wise men
Spake to us, and see to it that he makes no escape
Through bribery; bring him to book." (1355)

91. In obedience to the royal mandate, with an army
Marching to the beat of drums, the ministers hied
To Tiruvatikai girt with cloud-capped gardens fragrant
And came to him that had clean cut away
The fetters of the foreign faith. (1356)

92. The ministers and warriors who came there
Stood encircling him, the servitor of the Lord-Brahmin
Whose matted hair falshes like lightning-clusters,
And said: "The king had commanded us, this day,
To secure you to his presence; go with us."
When thus spoken to, he, the perfect *tapaswi*,
Faced them straight and answered them thus. (1357)

93. "We are ruled by none." Thus he began to hymn
And in sweet Tamil dulcet, hailed the Lord,
-- The Master of our Gospels; the One that wears
On His matted hair the moist moon and the Ganga --;
It was a garland rich, a decad of divine *tanndakas;*
He then said; "We are beyond the pale of your behest." (1358)

94. When thus the kingly servitor spake, the ministers
Fell at his feet and prayed to him; thus entreated
The servitor of the Lord whose banner sports the Bull,
Went with them thinking the Lord would be
Aidant and remediate, whatever the happenings be;
He acquiesced in their action; they took him
To the palace of the martial and wrathful monarch
And caused their arrival to be announced. (1359)

95. The Pallava who heard it, addressed the Jains
Whose habiliments were mats, thus: "What should be
Done unto him? Declare." Then the hare-brained ones
Who had deserted dharma and salvation, untouched by fear,
Said: "Lock him in the lime-kiln." (1360)

96. The king then told them thus that were nearby: "Do so."
When the cruel ruler of exceeding wrath spake thus,
They put the great one inside the kiln in which
Fierce fire that could smelt, was raging;
They barred it with many bolts and locks, effectively. (1361)

97. When the servitor ruled by the Lord entered the kiln
He bore on his crown the grace of the divine feet
Of the Lord that dances in the *Ambalam* and thought thus:
"Can ever troubles assail the devotees of the Supreme One?"
Thus he hymned a divine decad and through his mind
Panoplied in resolute trust, beheld the First One and prayed. (1362)

98. The kiln raging in spiralling heat, became like unto
The cool pool rich in lotuses and blown over by the southerly
In spring time; eke was it like the full moon's white beams;
To these was added the soft strumming of *yazh;* in sooth
The coolth was like unto the shade of Lord's gracious feet. (1363)

99. He adored the feet of the Lord -- the nectar that is
By love yielded, the Creator of all entia,
Our Lord-god, the Almighty, the Wearer of *pingngaka*,
Who rules the cosmos, the One who is sweet to hail,
The Lord in whose crest rest the flawless crescent
And the long Ganga ever-during --,
And abode in bliss unalloyed. (1364)

100. After a sennight, the Pallava bade the senseless Jains
To look into the lime-kiln; the benighted Jains
Who were like the assemblage of dark murky nights,
-- The ever-deluded --, oped the lime-kiln. (1365)

101. Immersed in the flood of bliss, he shone clear
Having drunk of the nectar gushing
From the honied flower-feet of the Lord; flawless was he;
He was brimming with happiness; when they beheld him,
They said: "He is not a whit by harm afflicted;
What wonder is this?" (1366)

102. "This is no wonder; by reason of the training
He has had in Jainism he thrives deathless."
Thus they reported to the king and added:
"Wisdon demands that he be fed with cruel venom."
Thus spake they -- the constant practitioners of evil --,
With their stinking mouths. (1367)

103. When the king who was spoilt by his association
With the evil Jains, heard this, he said:
"Feed him with poison." Then the hostile Jains
Caused Tirunavukkarasu partake of rice
Mixed with milk and dreaded venom. (1368)

104. The servitor who was blessed with the valiancy
To demonstrate unto the world the glories of the Lord
Of ruddy hair, fully aware of the deception
Of the hypocrites, ate the poisonous food provided
By the evil Jains, firm-resolved that unto the devotees
Of the Lord, poison indeed was nectar.
Lo, the venom caused him no harm at all. (1369)

105. If by the hallowed Lord whose divine frame is
Adorned with the Holy Ash, the ancient venom
That would annihilate all the worlds, would turn
Into nectar, annulling misery, is it then
A wonder that for the servitors of Pasupati,
Venom should indeed turn into nectar. (1370)

106. As the servitor ruled by the Lord, was unharmed
Even when he consumed poison, the Jains were forced to own
That dreaded venom too was nectar for him; so were they
With fear overwhelmed; then they thought thus: "If he
Meets not with death, his survival shall be our doom!"
Thus resolved they proceeded to report to the king
Who acted hostilely (towards the true devotee). (1371)

107. "Though fed with poisonous victuals, he forfended
The fatal consequence by virtue of the *mantras*
Which he had cultivated thanks to our religion
And which nullify the effect of poison; should he
Survive, our life and your reign will end, for sure."
Thus they, spake, established in the evil way. (1372)

108. "When the spoilt King heard them, he said:
"How shall we punish him that has destroyed our faith?"
In reply they said: "That we may counter
His *mantras*, you have him trodden over
By your royal tusker mighty." (1373)

109. The Jain-sinners of utmost baseness said:
"Have him run over by the musty mammoth."
The King who was duty-bound to guard the world
But was bent on hellish deed, commanded
That his wrathful and murderous tusker be made
To trample the crown of Saint Vakeesa. (1374)

110. Came there the elephant of peerless strength, destroying
The yards where tuskers were ychained;
It moved like a hill and tore apart mansions;
It pulled down *mantapams;* over the heads
Of them that wielded the *ankus*, it stamped;
Lo, the raging mammoth, musty and mad,
Was fiercer than even Death. (1375)

111. Snapping the thick rope set round its neck,
Breaking the chains fastened around its legs,
Scaring the feathered race that winged above,
Unmindful of the pelting of clay-balls,
Swaying its trunk like a swing, trumpeting loud in wrath,
Moving massively, striking terror, like a musty hill
In appearance, ran the tusker whence rained fragrant ichor. (1376)

112. By its thunderclap-trumpeting, it scared the tuskers
That ever guard the cardinal points; earth quaked
As it planted thereon its mighty foot;
With tempestuous velocity like the *vatava* flame
That devours the universe at the end of the *Yuga*
In upsurging wrath and speed ran the tusker. (1377)

113. The tusker of the murderous trunk, verily a hill,
With its twin tusks that were truly diamond blades
Destroyed the herds of steeds that passed nearby
And rent into two, walls and pials,
Pulling them out, piece by piece.
Eke did it destroy their ornamental parts
And eventually came into the open. (1378)

114. The false and cruel Jains, ripe in evil, plied
The tusker of murderous trunk -- verily a black hill,
Before Tirunavukkarasar and caused it charge him.
He remained however undaunted; he but meditated
On the feet of the Lord who blazes on His Bull. (1379)

115. The great and glorious one, the prince of *tapas*,
Beholding the tusker that was set on him,
Invokes the Lord of gods who lovingly rides the Bull,
With the hymn; *Sunna Venn Santana Santu ....*
He sings the divine decad in delight great
That the world may stand redeemed. (1380)

116. Facing the mad and irate mammoth set on him
By the diabolical Jains, he hymned in Tamil thus:
"We are the servitor of the Dancer who sports
The matted hair, long and incarnadine,
The supreme Lord of gods,
The wielder of the three-pronged trident,
The God of Veerattam! We have nothing to dread at all." (1381)

117. He hymned the gracious Tamil garlands,
Stablished in the palladium of his God;
The divine serviteur was truly love incarnate;
The tusker circumambulated him and bowed;
It fell on earth, worshipped him and rose up;
Men in all directions witnessed this. (1382)

118. When the elephant thus adored the Lord's servitor,
And moved away, the cruel mahouts goaded it
To charge him; they blocked its passage,
Turned it against him and with *ankus*
Pierced its pachyderm; thus teased again and again
The tusker smote them all and began to attack the Jains. (1383)

119. The tusker ran after them, charged them,
Smote them, attacked them, rent them
And killed a good many of them; it shook
The whole city; it was like unto Mount *Mandara*
Which of yore stirred and churned the vast ocean;
The beast but wrought havoc for the monarch. (1384)

120. The base Jains that escaped the tusker,
Forfeited of honour and besieged by misery,
Stood bewildered; they went to the king
-- The lord of armies and ruler of the world --,
And severally fell at his feet and wailed aloud.
The sovereign who had abjured the lofty way
Then in ire asked them thus: "What shall we do now?" (1385)

121. From the 'mutti' state he had learnt
From our own faith, he has annulled
Our sorcery and caused it to boomerang.
Only when he who through (your) tusker shattered
Your glory, dies, the dishonour that had visited you
Would vanish, like smoke that would cease to be
Once the belching fire is put out. (1386)

122. When the benighted Jains spake thus, the great sinner
Of a king said: "How should we deal with him
That hath destroyed our hoary faith and caused us misery?"
Thus questioned the truculent Jains said:
"Fasten him to a stone and throw him into the sea." (1387)

123. The king who heard them, commanded the punishers thus:
"Take with you him that wrought the evil, safely;
Fasten him with a rope to a stone; convey him in a boat
And throw him into the roaring main." (1388)

124. The cruel Jains joined the executioners;
Tirunavukkarasar went with them that his pious heart
Might shine the more glorious; as ordered by the king
The base wrought the deed in the sea. (1389)

125. When they left him having done the deed,
He that was thrown into the sea of incomparable depth
-- The servitor true, armed in Godly strength --,
Resolved thus: "Come what may; I'll hail my Father."
Then in opulent Tamil he hymned *Siva-Panchakshara*. (1390)

126. With the pure and sublime words: "Sol Tunai Vetiyan"
He began to sing his divine Tamil garland;
He hymned the decad holding fast thereto
In loving consciousness *NaMaSiVaYa*, the *Panchakshara*,
That abides with one and saves one from misery. (1391)

127. As he in flooding love held fast to the *Panchakshara*
Which is not to be adequately hailed even by Brahma
And other immortals, and as he truly hailed it
The stone began to float on the dark sea. (1392)

128. The huge stone served as a throne for Arasu
And became a float; the tight rope that fastened
His divine person, got snapped; the servitor --
True and great, shone unharmed resplendent. (1393)

129. If the *Panchakshara*, can help embodied lives
Fastened to the stone of *Anava* with the ropes
Of twyfold deeds and thrown into the sea of life
Reach the shore of eternal life without getting drowned,
Is it then a wonder that it wafted ashore Arasu
Fastened to a mere stone, from this sea? (1394)

130. With his billowy hands *Varuna* upbore
Tirunavukkarasu -- the embodiment of compassion,
The one borne aloft by the mystic pentad--,
Fully conscious of his glory; great indeed is
The *tapas* wrought by *Varuna*, of yore,
To bear on his crown the holy servitor. (1395)

131. Ever-glorious *Varuna* converting the black stone
Into a palanquin, bore the lord of the Logos;
Blessed to carry him thus, he conveyed him
Near to flowery Tiruppatirippuliyoor. (1396)

132. Holy throngs of devotees -- *tapaswis* true --, gathered
In the holy place at which the servitor arrived
And roared vociferously in delight great;
Like the sound of "Hara!Hara!" issuing from
All directions, the billowy main too resounded. (1397)

133. Worshipful Tirunavukkarasar with the holy company
Adored the Lord of Tiruppatirippuliyoor who sports
In his matted hair the white crescent; he prostrated
Before Him, rose up and sang hymns that the way
Of divine grace might in the world shine very well. (1398)

134. His hymn began thus: "He is Mother and Father too."
The hymn ended thus: "He is the invisible aid to His devotees."
With this and other hymns he lauded the Lord
That bears on His crown the Ganga that flows from the heavens,
The One that is the Witness true to all the lives,
In garlands of cool and merciful Tamil. (1399)

135. He hymned similar prosperous garlands of Tamil verse
And sojourned there; impelled by a loving desire
To hail the feet of the Lord, the Rider of the ever-young
And victorious Bull, enshrined at Veerattam,
He left for Tiruvatikai where abides the Lord who gutted
With fire the triple hostile skyey cities. (1400)

136. On the way he hailed the Lord of gods enshrined
At Tirumanikuzhi and Tirutthinainakar and hymned Him
In psalm and song and solemn strain;
As he plied his steps onwards, incense breathed by flowers
Laved his sacred feet; thus the lord of words whose import
Is divine, fared forth and crossed the river Gedilam. (1401)

137. After having overcome all the cruel and evil deeds
Ot the diabolic Jains, when the Lord of Tamil sweet
Marched forth triumphantly, the dwellers of Tiruvatikai
Rich in cloud-capped mansions, to receive him gloriously
Caused the resounding of musical instruments
And announced auspiciously his arrival. (1402)

138. Broad and beauteous festoons, rich bunches of areca
And plantains of long leaves, they planted fittingly;
They dangled fresh and flawless and ever-bright
Garlands on towers and turrets and pials; they coated red
The floor of the earth before each house and the pials too;
Thus they made the beauteous city even more beauteous. (1403)

139. The citizens of the prosperous city abounding in abiding love
And their women decked with choice jewels, caused
The flourish of trumpets and drums; vocal music sevenfold
Pervaded everywhere; gold-dust, fresh flowers and puffed rice
Were mixed and strewn; then the dwellers of the city
Came to its outskirts, circled the servitor and received him. (1404)

140. His golden frame was smeared with the holy ash,
Pure and white; garlands of *rudraksha* dangled
From his person; his *chinta* was ever engaged
In the service of gently pressing the Lord's roseate feet;
Melting love gushing forth rained as tears from his eyes;
His crimson lips hymned the words of decads
Surcharged with redemptive grace; such was he
That stepped into the street. (1405)

141. Beholders raised their hands above their heads
In adoration, and said: "Having beheld this
Incarnation of compassion, how could the Jains
Of prideful evil deeds, be incensed to harm him?"
They adored the Lord who claimed his servitorship. (1406)

142. Thus hailed by innumerable men and women
He fared forth with the holy company of devotees
From whom blazed the lustre of the holy ash;
Then the servitor came to Tiruveerattanam
Where abides the Lord whose hue is ruddy as coral. (1407)

143. He moved into the shrine of the Lord of the celestials
Who claimed and ruled him, and he adored Him;
He was immersed in the bliss born of trusted love
And devotion deep; rueing his past he hymned thus:
"O poor me, to have jeered at my Lord in the past!"
He sang *tandakas* in exquisite Tamil and thus flourished. (1408)

144. The Lord who is inaccessible to *Vishnu* and *Brahma*
Is easy of access to His devotee; He is the nectar
Abiding at Tiruvatikai Veerattam girt with
The extending river; Him did Tirunavukkarasar
Of incomprehensible greatness hail in splendid Tamil
With his mind poised in love; he hymned many many decads,
And served the Lord and thus spent his days. (1409)

145. The Pallava who pursued the course of ill-treatment
At the instance of the hare-brained Jains, severed
All nexus with them, as his fettering Karma came to an end;
Thither he came and bowed before the Lord's servitor;
Having quit the cruel Jains, he embraced the faith
Of the Lord who rides the ever-young Bull. (1410)

146. The Kadava king who came to con the falsity
Of the Jains who knew not the way to salvation,
Came by truth; he razed all the shrines
And mutts of the Jains at Pataliputra, and with
Their spoils brought to Tiruvatikai, raised the temple
Gunaparaveechharam for the brow-eyed Lord. (1411)

147. During these days, the king of Tamil sweet
-- The divine saint Vakeesa --, rendered manifold service;
He then desired to visit the many shrines of the Lord
Who sports a snake on His crown which wears
The crescent, adore thereat, hymn His name divine
In Tamil, and thus serve Him. (1412)

148. He worshipped Tiruvennainalloor which is near
Tiruvatikai, grace-abounding Tiruvamatthoor,
Tirukkovaloor and other shrines; he hymned
Opulent decads of Tamil and by love impelled
Fared forth and reached Tiruppennakadam
Where the Rider of the Bull abides in love
And joy ever-crescent. (1413)

149. He entered that auspicious city where the Brahmins
Fostered the chanted Vedas and where clouds rested
On the tops of mansions; he, the divine saint,
Hailed by all the world, adored and hailed
The ever abiding Tirutthoongkaanaimadam
Of the Lord of matted hair and hymned it. (1414)

150. "I'll no longer suffer life to abide in this body
Contaminated by its contact with base Jainism;
So, my lord, you should inscribe on me, your signum
That I may choose to survive." Thus he sang
A rich garland of verse before the Lord. (1415)

151. "To Your golden feet I address my petition!"
Thus he began his hymn to the Lord-God,
-- The Origin and End of all entia, the Lord
Who is concorporate with His consort Uma,
Sankara, the Conferrer of weal --; he gloriously hymned
There Tiruviruttham truly hailing His goodly names. (1416)

152. By the grace of the Lord whose beauteous bow
Is the auric Mount Meru and who abides at the ever-divine
Tirutthoongkaanaimadam, a *Siva-Bhoota*
Invisible to them that were nearby, came there
And imprinted on Vakeesa's beauteous shoulders
The marks of the effulgent three-leaved trident
And the wrathful Bull of the Lord. (1417)

153. He beheld on his beauteous shoulders, the sacred marks;
His mind rejoiced; thinking of the grace of his Lord
His eyes rained tears in unending continuum;
Adoring, he fell on earth and was by love possessed;
His chinta grew sublime and lofty beyond measure;
"Lo, I stand redeemed!" he cried and rose up. (1418)

154. He hailed the feet of the Lord of Toongkaanaimadam,
Verily a shoot of ethereal flame, and rendered
Fitting service; he willingly sojourned there
Some days poised in service; he also hailed the Lord
That abides in peerless Tiruvaratthurai which breathes
A sylvan fragrance and Tirumuthukunram girt with
Gardens over whose tops the sailing clouds rest. (1419)

155. He composed flower-soft garlands of Tamil verse
And adored the holy places nearby, rich in cool fords
Where the Lord of the Bull non-pareil abides; Him he
Hailed in the nearby shrines too and fared forth
Eastward on the bank of the river Niva
Flanked by many lotus ponds and pools. (1420)

156. To come by the fruit of life and embodiment
He desired to adore the feet of the Lord whose matted hair
Decked with flowers, displays the coursing Ganga
And who dances in the ever-glorious *Tillai-Ambalam;*
He hied and came near Tiruppuliyoor
Girt with flowery gardens melliferous. (1421)

157. When Tirunavukkarasar came to the sacred bourne
Of Tillai where the Lord unknowable by *Vishnu*
And Brahma, dances, he fell sheer on earth
In adoration devout; with impassioned love sprialling
He passed through the way that lay across
Gardens where peacocks danced in joy fronting each other,
And the cool fields of *Marutam* whose tanks were
Thick with fragrant lotuses resembling visages. (1422)

158. Near tanks of honied and dense-petalled lotuses
Where graze old buffaloes, are very tall bamboos
Growing thick like a jungle; sugar-canes that grow here
Are equally tall and from their nodes are showered
Ripe pearls; it looks as though that these, beholding
The sacred feet of the great servitor, are raining tears
From their eyes; fields of such fecundity
Flourish everywhere in this realm. (1423)

159. "Behold him coming, Tirunavukkarasar
Of Wisdom par excellence! As he moves onward
The fields recede; give up the ways that fetter you
To embodiment; come hither that the shackles
Of twyfold deeds that bind you, may break."
Thus sang koels perched on the twigs and branches
Of trees in the sacred groves; he beheld these
Groves and gardens fronting him. (1424)

160. As he came bowing in adoration, on all sides
Over beauteous branches on which perched
Parakeets of growing feathers, and pretty starlings,
Beholding the form divine of the lofty king
Of the Tamil tongue who was poised
In supreme servitorship thanks to his *tapas* of yore,
Saying, "What wonder is this!" flew before him
And chanted "Hara! Hara!" the words with which
Lord Siva is hailed, by reason of their past training. (1425)

161. When thus they chanted before him the beauteous words
Of the Vedas, he too bowed; as in his mind
Already full of grace, joy and love and devotion deep
Began to well up, his words became incoherent;
Thus he came to the beauteous western tower
Capped by clouds and girt with a vast fort
And situate at the boundary of the hallowed city of Tillai
Where the Brahmins chant the holy words of the Vedas. (1426)

162. Thither was he received by them whose sole wealth
Was *tapas* which could end the misery of embodiment;
With them he entered through the beauteous tower
Near which wafted the scent of water fresh;
He adored the sacred street in front of him,
The street which fosterd Sivam, the street where
Flourish the mansions of Tillai-Brahmins --
The masters of the great Vedas and many a bible
Of instruction, the wealthy citizens who ever
Hail the feet of Lord Siva, the Ruler of all --,
And stepped into it. (1427)

163. Here get scattered the crest-jewels of the celestial rulers
Who get jostled when they throng to behold the Lord;
The divine street is also decked with long rows of chains
Of ninefold gems and fragrant wreaths;
Vayu who does the service of sweeping, sweeps these away
And Varuna does the service of washing;
Finding their services to be flawed and imperfect
Worshipful devotees sweep and wash the street afresh. (1428)

164. He duly adored the beauteous street thick with pennants
Through which even the rays of the sun could not pierce;
Again he fell on earth in adoration deep at the tower
That rose up in the west, where prayers of devotees
Merged with the resounding of the world-redeeming Vedas
Prayerfully invoked by goodly saints, and moved in. (1429)

165. He circumambulated the auric Tirumalikai-p-patthi
Capped by beauteous clouds; a sad and measurelessly
Passionate love sea-like, verily possessed him
And the hair on his person stood erect, thrilled;
He entered through the golden tower of redemptive grace;
Here he beheld before Him the *Ponnambalam* where the Lord
Whose throat is blued by venom, enacts His dance. (1430)

166. The *Ambalam* that glowed with the light of liberation,
The ever-increasing gnosis, tallied with what
His mind had already envisioned; it was now
Before him, a visual reality; with a beatitude
Of bliss born of sheer love, he was now endowed;
He drank of the nectarean dance of the Lord's
Ankleted feet -- not to be clearly comprehened by
The questing *Vishnu*, *Brahma*, the celestials and also lives
Of variform embodiment --, insatiate. (1431)

167. His hands of their own accord folded above his head
In adoration; his eyes rained tears endlessly;
His organs of inner sensorium thawed in love;
No sooner would his beatific body fall on earth in worship
Than would it rise up quick in adoration;
Immeasurable grew his impassioned love
When he beheld the dance divine of the Supreme Lord
Whose matted hair cascades like lightning-clusters. (1432)

168. As he fell down in adoration and rose up to worship,
Times without number, he divined subtly
The Lord's question: "When did you come, dear one?"
From the dance divine enacted in the *Ambalam*
Flooded mercy yielded by grace; blessed
With that true bliss he hymned the divine psalms
Of *Tiruviruttham*, and again impelled by spiralling love
He sang the melodic *Tiru-nerisai-mozhi*. (1433)

169. "I am no devotee who can truly hymn you!"
Thus he melodised and thus completed it:
"O father, behold this servitor that hath come
To eye Your dance!" With this hymn and hymns
Such-like, he hailed Him in sweet garlands
Of Tamil verse; borne then by a love to render
Manual service, he moved out thence. (1434)

170. In the divine yards of the shrine ablaze with gems
And in the sacred streets where waft streamers tall
And through which ply auric chariots bejewelled,
He rendered fitting service; he spent his time
In worship and he hymned pure psalms
With his practised lips. (1435)

171. Bubbling with great and gracious joy, he sang
The decad beginning thus: "*Annam Palikkum
Tillai*" and such other *Tirukkuruntokais;*
With his holy *Uzhavaram*, he rendered
Divine and magnificent service, upborne
By upsurging love; tears bedewed his person
Which blazed with white patches of the holy ash. (1436)

172. As he thus throve, poised in manifold service
He fared forth to *Tiruvetkalam* and adored
And hymned the Lord whose banner sports
The Bull; then he repaired to Tirukkazhippalai
Where the Lord of blue throat for ever abides;
Thither he sojourned that the world might thrive. (1437)

173. He bowed before the feet of Manavala Nampi,
The Lord who majestically rides the irate Bull,
And sang the song divine which oped thus:
"She opes her comely coral-lips and hails Him
As the God of gods!" Similar decads divine
He sang and loving numbers in Tamil munificent;
Thither he abode hailing the Lord who is rare
To be comprehended; as his memory hovered
On Tiruppuliyoor, he returned there. (1438)

174. He left Tirukkazhippalai where the billows of the sea
Shore up chanks into the yards of houses,
And as he passed through the cool gardens of *Punnai*
Whose branches are studded with buds,
He sang the decad whose import is as follows:
"Can I thrive or survive even for a second, forgetting
The Lord-Dancer of the *Ambalam* who willingly
Gets enshrined in the hailing mind?"
Thus singing he reached *Tillai*. (1439)

175. Here he began his decad thus: "He is the rare One!"
Thus in redemptive Tamil he hymned the great
Tirutthandakam inseparable from devotees' minds;
He adored the Lord that dances in the *Ponnambalam*
Whose blazing effulgence extends to all the worlds,
And hailed Him with more and more hymns in Tamil. (1440)

176. He sang a decad of rich Tamil hymns wrought
Of beauteous words of supreme truth, wondrously thus:
"The ruby-red matted hair of the Lord is verily
A terrace whereon the moon sheds its rays!"
His heart of love melting, his eyes twain raining tears,
His lips articulating His praise and himself engaged
In service, he spent his days. (1441)

177. By the grace of the Lord who rides the red-eyed Bull
And who is enshrined at Tirukkazhumalam
Which floats unharmed even when the worlds end
During the great deluge, the Child of the Gospels
Was fed by the Daughter of Himavant, with her
Breast-milk lovingly mixed with Gnosis which
Fosters, augments and total confers *Sivam;*
From the devotees he heard these tidings divine. (1442)

178. Even as he drank the nectarean milk of the Mother,
He was blessed with the valiancy to hymn and hail
In munificent garlands of the sevenfold Tamil-music
The Devourer of the venom of the ocean-stream, thus:
"Behold Him, my Lord-God!" Eke could he at Him point;
When he heard this glory of the great one
Of Sirakazhi, wondrous love welled up in him;
In his mind blossomed a loving desire
To adore his ever-glorious flower-feet. (1443)

179. That very moment he adored the ankleted feet
Of the *Ambalam's* Lord-Dancer, and took His gracious leave;
Falling prostrate on the divine street that does away
With the falsity of embodiment, he crossed it
Rolling clockwise; thus departing, he came
To the bourne of the divine city which pervades all places
With its ethereal essence, and there adored it;
On his way he visited Tirunaraiyoor where the Lord
Of the ineffable glory abides, and hailed it,
And moved onward hymning. (1444)

180. Devotee-throngs came surrounding him;
His hands were poised in adoration; his holy person
Blazed with the holy ash; from him poured forth
Visible mercy that thawed the minds of the beholders;
Thus, even thus, Tirunavukkarasar who in the past
Reached ashore from the billowy sea
In a stone that served as his float --
The lord-author of the munificent and inditable
Gospels of Tamil --, came near Tiruppukali. (1445)

181. "The Lord who wields a huge hill as a bow
Had himself in the past claimed him in grace
By afflicting him with a cruel stomach-ache;
He is ruled by Him; even he is coming hither."
When the godly child heard of this, a great desire
To behold him possessed him; circled by servitors
Whose minds were filled with grace,
He came forth to receive him. (1446)

182. He that wept and thereby drew to him
The Rider of the Bull, came before him adoring;
In melting love Tirunavukkarasu moved
Into the midst of the devotee-throngs
And fell at his feet in flawless and spiralling love;
Him he lifted up with his flowery hands ineffable
And adored; when the godly child addressed him:
"O father!" he replied:" Behold your servitor!" (1447)

183. He, the godly child whose lips are red as coral
And who ceased to weep when the Goddess-Mother gave him
The nectar of Gnosis in a cup of ruddy gold,
And Tirunavukkarasar -- two divine individuals
Of exceeding glory and splendour --, had met;
The servitors of Siva who were blessed to witness
This holy meeting, delighted beyond measure,
Spoke such hallowed words that caused
The increased pervasion of *Sivam* through the whole world,
Praised and hailed by the very celestials. (1448)

184. Thirunavukkarasar was supremely happy that he was
Blessed to adore the feet of the godly child;
The patron of the ever-growing wisdom was overflowing
With soaring joy that he could adore Vakeesar;
In soul-commingling love, each in truth was oned
With the other; afire were they with a desire
To hail the feet of the Lord of Tonipuram
That would float even during the great deluge. (1449)

185. Like a sea unique that soars in grace, was the one;
Like a sea of love for all the world, was the other;
Like the twin holy eyes of Saivism that is atop
All the religions of sublime import, were they;
Like the grace of the Lord who ate the dreaded venom
That the worlds might flourish, and like the grace
Of Her, the Magna Mater of the universe, were they --
The child of clear wisdom that yields gnosis
And the lord of language --; together they reached
The celestial shrine of the Lord of ruddy matted hair. (1450)

186. They bowed before the beauteous tower of the Lord
Of Sirkazhi girt with gardens where bees hum,
Moved in, circumambulated the sky-high *Vimana*,
Lofty and great, and bowed and prostrated in worship;
Then the godly child of Sirkazhi addressed him thus:
"O father, be pleased to hail your Lord in psalm and song."
Hearing this Tirunavukkarasar, with eyes raining tears
And lips poised in truthful scriptures pouring hallowed words
Hymned melting: (1451)

187. Standing before the Lord lovingly enthroned
In Tonipuram with His Grand Consort in love, Him
He hailed with the rich and redeeming Tamil verse
Which oped thus: *"Paar kontu mooti ..."*
He moved out thence unwillingly and proceeded
To the *matam* of the divine child and had his repast.
Thither he sojourned for many a day and his kinship
Knit to privileged intimacy was on the ascendant
As on the first day (of their meeting). (1452)

188. Whilst thus Tirunavukkarasar and the godly child
Confabulated with each other as a result of which
Boundless joy increasingly issued softening
Their minds, and as thus they spent their days
There arose out of true love in the divine heart
Of Tirunavukkarasar a longing to adore
All the shrines of the Lord of the beauteous blue throat,
In the delta of the *Ponni*. (1453)

189. Tirunavukkarasar visited, Tirukkolakka with him,
Adored it and returned with its Lord's leave;
Then taking leave of the divine child, he fared forth
To vast Tirukkaruppariyaloor, Punkoor, Needoor,
Tirukkurukkai great, Thiruninriyoor,
Tirunanipalli pleasing to behold, and other shrines
Dear to the Lord of the Gospels and adored at these shrines
The feet of the Lord whose forehead displays an eye,
And proceeded onward. (1454)

190. His way lay on both the banks of *the* Kaveri whose stream
Is unfailing; he hailed Tirucchemponpalli's Lord
Whose banner sports the Bull, in hymns; he adored
And hailed the Lord in rich garlands of Tamil verse
At Tirumayiladuturai girt with lofty groves,
Tirutthurutthi and Velvikkudi that are
Situate on either bank of the coursing Kaveri
And *Ethirkolpadi;* he hailed many other shrines too;
Humbly he moved on to Tirukkodika where the Lord
That loves the ablutions of the *panchakavya*, abides
And adored him; then he reached Tiruvavaduturai. (1455)

191. "Reaching Avaduturai cool, I stand redeemed!"
Thus he oped his immeasurable *tandakam* divine;
Then he hailed the Lord in rich garlands
Of variform word-blossoms such as *Tirukkuruntokai*,
Tirunerisai and metrical *vrittas;* moved deep
By devotion, he abode there for many a day,
Hailed by the world in love, and rendered service divine
With his inseparable *uzhavaram*. (1456)

192. He reached Tiruvidaimaruthoor on the bank
Of the Kaveri whose waves throw up gold and gems;
In love he adored the Lord who sports a fawn
In his hand, sojourned there and hailed Him
In rich garlands of Tamil verse multifoliate;
At Tirunakesuram he adored the Lord that wears
Speckled serpents, and hailed Him in rare garlands
Of Tamil; thence he came to Pazhaiyarai girt with
Flowery gardens fragrant and thence to Satthimutram. (1457)

193. Reaching Tiru Satthimutram he hailed Sivakkozhuntu
Who approvingly delighted in the exemplary *pooja*
Lovingly performed by Himavant's daughter; he adored
The Lord who is ever sweet; he then repaired
To the shrine's yard, performed his regular service
Of *uzhavaram* and hailed the Lord in Tamil hymns. (1458)

194. "He comes amain, the chieftain!" Thus he oped the hymn
And proceeded to sing thus: "Before death doth destroy me
Plant indelibly Your flowery feet on my head!"
When thus he sang the toothsome decad, the Lord
Bade him thus: "Come, O come to Tirunalloor."
Thus graced, Vakeesar adored Him in joy. (1459)

195. When the sempiternal servitor supernal, treading
The way of grace of ever-increasing goodliness
Arrived there, he bowed before the Lord; as he rose up,
Saying: "We fructify your cherished desire"
Lord-Siva touched his head with His flower-feet. (1460)

196. "He set his moist feet divine on my head!"
Thus he hymned the divine *tandakam*, hailed
The lord in melodious music, and melting in love
Thinking of the Holy One's grace, he fell down
In adoration and rose up; he blossomed inly
And was filled with the charm of fulfilment;
Like an utterly indigent person endowed,
On a sudden, with limitless wealth, his mind rejoiced. (1461)

197. The Lord of language rendered fitting service divine
Everyday for the Lord of Tirunalloor, sang
Many garlands of Tamil psalms melodic
And hailed Him; thus rendering divine service
He sojourned there. (1462)

198. Thence he visited many shrines beginning with
Tirukkarukavoor, Tiruavoor and Tiruppalatthurai
Where the brow-eyed Lord is enshrined in grace,
Adored Him and rendered Him great service
Borne by spiralling desire; he abode at Tirunalloor
Hailing it in melting love and never from it parting. (1463)

199. With the gracious leave of the Lord he came
To Tiruppazhanam rich in watery fields where *valai* fish
Leap in joy; there was he blessed to adore the feet
Of the Lord whose throat is blue with the hue
Of the venom and who decked with serpents
For jewels, dances during mid-night. (1464)

200. He adored at all the peerless encircling shrines
Where Siva abides willingly, in melting love.
The lord of language who had come by the True Ens
Then came to Tingaloor of holy Appoothi of ineffable glory. (1465)

201. He came to the house of hallowed Appoothi,
The Brahmin par excellence, having seen
And heard of his many charitable endowments
Of choultries, wells, tanks and water-booths; all these
And his sons too were named after Tirunavukkarasar. (1466)

202. Him he received with a rejoicing heart
Together with his wife, children and great kin;
In delight great they fell at his feet in worship
And rose up; him they stood encircling;
He then beseeched the lord of language to be
Pleased to partake of the victuals in his house; lo,
He was blessed with the consent of the *tapaswi*-devotee. (1467)

203. Appoothi who without ever having seen him, was
Linked to him in great and privileged sibship;
In swelling love, he had for him, nectarean rice
Dishes of curry and other variform dishes, prepared;
Food, meet for the servitor, was thus made ready. (1468)

204. For feeding of Tirunavukkarasar, the Brahmin
Of great love and matching wisdom, bade his eldest son
Who but bore the servitor's grand name, hie to the garden
And secure a long and tender leaf
Of fecund plantain with well-set stalk. (1469)

205. He hastened away in great alacrity and when he,
Without delay, was about to cut a tender and soft
Plantain leaf, a snake bit him; ignorng it
He cut a long and tender plantain-leaf
And returned quick that the servitor might be duly fed. (1470)

206. The cruel venom shot up to his cranium;
Though giddy he could hand over the leaf to his mother;
Grown weak, he now fell down without disclosing
The bite he had suffered from the fiery serpent;
This beholding, his parents cried: "We are done for;
The holy one might not eat here on account of this."
So they screened the incident from him. (1471)

207. They concealed the corpse of their son; they were
Untouched by commotion; then they came to him
And beseeched him thus: "Our lord, be pleased
To partake of food." By the grace of the Lord,
He divined the inly agitation of the divine servitors
Of the Lord of gods and was out to cure it. (1472)

208. He grew exceedingly merciful for their act of love
In concealing the corpse of their son, that day;
He had the body brought to the temple of the Lord
Who wears on His matted hair *konrai* blooms,
And hymned the decad beginning thus: "One it is!"
When thus he hailed the Lord in solemn verse,
Cured of venom, the boy stood resurrected. (1473)

209. He wasn't happy that his wondrous son rose
From the dead; he but languished as the servitor
Had not eaten; to remove his distress,
The divine servitor Vakeesar went to the sad one's house,
Partook of the feast and there abode. (1474)

210. From Tingaloor, follwed by the holy Brahmin
He proceeded to Tiruppazhanam where abides
The Lord who rides the beauteous-eyed Bull;
In great love he neared the feet of the Lord
And hymned Him, standing before Him. (1475)

211. Extolling greatly the way of Appoothi's life,
The one of natural glory that stands poised
Below the golden feet of the Lord of matted hair
Who wears the crepuscular crescent as a chaplet,
He hymned in goodly and gloriously sweet Tamil
The divine decad *Sonmalai*, a garland of verse. (1476)

212. He plied himself in the duty of adoring the Lord
Who decks Himself with serpents of rising hoods
And the crescent young, in all the shrines;
Commencing from Tirucchotrutthurai,
Borne by unchanging love, he visited many shrines
And there hailed Him in melodious numbers;
He abode at Tiruppazhanam renderihg service divine. (1477)

213. He abode there for a great many days;
Thinking on the beauteous flowery feet
-- Of the Lord whose lovely throat is blued by poison --,
That were set on his crown, he came to Tirunalloor
Of wondrous *Madam*-temple, passing through
The southern bank of the Kaveri rich in water
And schools of carp-fish. (1478)

214. Thither he hailed the feet of the Lord, and poised
In love unabated, he adored him rendering
Hallowed service; as he thus sojourned there he was
Impelled by an abiding devotion immense
To hail Tiruvaroor whose Lord is unknown
To the Lotus-throned *Brahma* and the red-eyed *Vishnu*. (1479)

215. Taking leave of the Lord of Tirunalloor
He left for Pazhaiyarai and adored the feet
Of the Lord whose alms-bowl is a white skull
On which can be eyed rows of teeth; he adored
At many shrines and sang magnificent hymns
Composed of choice words; hailing Tiruvalanchuzhi
He came to Tirukkudamookku and thither hailed
The Lord who wears the crescent that shines at night. (1480)

216. At Tirunaloor, beauteous Tiruccherai,
Kudavayil and Tirunaraiyoor, he hailed
The feet of the Lord the words of whose Consort
Are sweet as milk; also he hailed and hymned
The Lord whose mount and banner is the Bull,
In many a shrine; he reached Tiruvanjiyam
In the south in whose cool watery fields the carps leap. (1481)

217. He bowed before Tirupperuveloor girt with gardens
Of great fragrance and hailed its Lord;
He also hailed the First One, the wearer
Of sweet-smelling *konrai* flowers; he adored the Lord
At Vilamar of redemptive grace; Vakeesar thus
Reached Tiruvaroor, the Lord of which
Burnt the triple hostile cities. (1482)

218. When Tirunavukkarasar was coming thither
The devotees of Tiruvaroor who were fully blessed
With the grace of the Lord of the long matted hair,
So decked everywhere the mansions and houses,
Beautiful to behold, that they looked even grander;
They made the sky-high streets shine auspicious. (1483)

219. Delighted by the advent of him who crossed
The billowy sea with the stone for a float
And his triumph over the *maya*
Wrought by the strong and cruel Jains,
Innumerable devotees proceeded to the outskirts
Without the forted walls, to receive him;
The lord of language adored them all
And moved in, chanting their praise. (1484)

220. "I am blessed to be the servitor of the servitors
Of the Lord that abides at the Ant-hill;
Can even I, who seeking redemption, came out
Of the fettering fold of Jainism, having
Companied with the base Jain sinners that would
In no way adhere to the path of salvation,
Be blessed with this beatitude?" Thus he spake
And moved into the divine street, tranced. (1485)

221. With the encircling devotees he reached the entrance
Decked with festoons and came to the ever-during
Devasiriyan abounding in grace, and adored it;
Passing through the inner entrances of the great shrine --
Verily a *Chakravala* Mountain --, he beheld before him
The Lord of the great, lustrous and beauteous Ant-hill. (1486)

222. As he beheld Him, he adored Him, he prostrated
Before Him with all his limbs touching the floor;
The hair on his hands, legs and other limbs stood erect;
He rose up; his eyes rained tears, as exceeding love
Welled up in him; he adored the lotus-feet
Of Tirumoolattanar and hymned *tandakams*. (1487)

223. "My one thought was to behold you!" Thus he
Commenced his decad gravid with all arts
And melted in prayer before the self-effulgent Light
That needs no trimming; he circumambulated
The beauteous shrine and hailed it; with a mind
Brimming with love, he moved out towards
The vast and divine outer entrance. (1488)

224. He reached the Devasiriyan fronting the court-yard
And bathed in the great ruby-lustre; there he sang thus:
"I am the petty filcher that snatched the green fruit
When the ripe ones were there; I adored not the Lord
Of Tiruvaroor in whose flowery gardens studded
With buds, *kuyils* sing and peacocks dance."
In misery and repentance he hymned, and abode there. (1489)

225. His eyes rained tears which streamed down his chest;
His holy lips sang sweet garlands of Tamil verse
Woven of nectarean words; his mind divine
Was oned with the auric, liberating feet of the Lord;
His hand wielded the *uzhavaram*, the instrument unique;
Such indeed was his form divine;
Rendering his service to the divine streets that the world
Might thrive, and poised in such service
He moved on humbly hymning and hailing the Lord. (1490)

226. Love-borne, during appointed hours of worship, he adored
The Lord-Dancer at the Ant-hill of Tiruvaroor
Of abiding glory; he hailed him with the flawless
And truthful decad commencing with the words:
"He is the Lord sung by the *Bhoota*-throng!"
He sang many a decad; devotion welled up in him;
His mind thawed and melted; he throve in love. (1491)

227. He hymned the greatness of the servitorship
Of *Naminandi* poised in the truth of the four Gospels;
He praised him in *Tiruvirittam*
In which he hailed the Lord-God; he also hailed
The glory of the Lord who wears honied *konrai* blooms,
Enshrined at Tiruvaroor Araneri; as was his wont
He rendered service for the stately streets, and abode there. (1492)

228. Thinking of Tiruvalivalam where abides the Lord whose
Matted hair sports the river, he there went
And adored the feet of the Lord who is concorporate
With Uma of the sacred breast-band; he hymned
In delight great; he fared forth to Keezhveloor
And Kanrappoor where abides the Lord whose throat
Is like a dark cloud, and sang soulful hymns; impelled
By love unabated, he then returned to Tiruvaroor. (1493)

229. The Lord-God *Veeti-Vitangkan* was taken out
In a holy procession on the *Tiruvatirai*-Day;
With servitors standing in the front row, he adored
The Lord with the adoring devotees; behind them stood
Adoring the celestials and *munis*; he beheld with his eyes
That greatness which diffused divine joy in all
The triple worlds; while thus the unique lord
Of language throve, by the grace of the Lord... (1494)

230. A loving desire uprose in his longing heart
To hail the roseate feet of Lord-Siva who
Presides over Tiruppukaloor; with a willing mind
That still abode at Tiruvaroor, he left somehow
That city and fared forth hailing the many shrines
Of the Lord who shares in His left half His Consort,
The daughter of Himavant -- the Lord of mountains. (1495)

231. During that time the godly child had left
Tiruppukali and was visiting many holy shrines
To adore there the Lord whose jewels are snakes;
Having adored the Lord of Pukaloor, the town ever fragrant
With *surapunnai* flowers, he was then abiding
At the sacred *matam* of Murukanar of peerless fame
Whose threefold sacred thread was flashing like lightning. (1496)

232. Having been pleased to hear of the coming
Of Arasu, the servitor ruled by the Lord,
To glorious Tiruppukaloor after having hailed
The Ruby-of-far-extending-lustre at the Ant-hill
Of beauteous Aroor, borne by a longing to receive him
The godly child fared forth encircled by throning devotees. (1497)

233. Hearing of the endearing words that the godly child
Of Seerkazhi dight with tanks where water-crows gather,
Was on his way to receive him, Vakeesar who was
Proceeding to Pukaloor whose river rolls with gems,
Felt supremely happy; when both the holy companies --
True servitors of the Holy Ash --, met, it was like
A confluence of twin seas wrought of moon-rays. (1498)

234. Tirunavukkarasar came to him and paid obeisance
To him and was in turn adored by Sivapuram's scion,
The divinely truthful and godly child of great gnosis;
Addressing him, Sambandhar said: "O Father, be pleased
To unfold the greatness of Tiruvaroor during these days
Of its festival!" Thus told, he who was ever poised
In the truth of the rare *Panchakshara* spake thus: (1499)

235. "How can I ever describe the happy opulence
Of the *Tiruvatirai*-Day festival of the Lord
Whose throat is dark and who presides over the city
Of Tiruvaroor in the south and who is enshrined
In the adoring mind?"
Thus he spake and sang the decad which oped thus:
"The canopy is wrought of pearls and the *chamaras*
Beauteous and golden, are whisked!" (1500)

236. When the son of the blue-throated Lord of gods
Who abides at beauteous Sanbai heard
The divine garland of sweet Tamil verse, he said:
"I'll now proceed straight to Tiruvaroor in the south
Dight with pools and ponds where buds burgeon,
Adore its Lord and then return here to abide with you." (1501)

237. To adore the Lord of Tiruvaroor girt with a great fort
The lord of Sanbai in whose streams lotuses thrive,
Fared forth; the lord of the tongue divine, borne
By devotion great moved into Pukaloor girt
With cool fields fragrant with blossoming flowers. (1502)

238. Tirunavukkarasar abode at that hoary town;
His heart was full of the lucid flood of devotion;
It poured out through his eyes and washed his
Sacred frame; in that ecstatic state he bowed
Before the Lord whose jewels are snakes the sacs
Of which are full of venom. (1503)

239. He adored the Lord of gods, the honey that is
Enshrined in southern Pukaloor, during all
The prescribed hours of worship and hymned Him
In liberating songs of exquisite poesy; performing
Divine service without break he abode there. (1504)

240. To Tirucchenkattankudi that confers glory,
Tirunallaru vast, the shrine Ayavanti
In Satthamankai girt with gardens rich
In flowery trees and Tirumarukal he fared forth
And adored the Lord, the delicate breasts of whose
Consort are cinctured with a breast-band,
And was immersed in joy. (1505)

241. Thus passed his days, a few in number;
Having adored the brow-eyed Lord
Of Tiruvaroor whose matted hair is ruddy
As coral, our godly child that had hailed
From Seerkazhi and had gained the true wisdom
Which is Gnosis, the wearer of the threefold
Sacred thread, arrived at Tiruppukaloor. (1506)

242. When the godly child was to arrive there, Vakeesar
Received him, impelled by great love and abode
With him in great joy; the munificent patron
Sirutthondar also joined them there; unto them
Also came flawless and glorious Tiruneelanakkar. (1507)

243. In that sacred *matam* of Murukanar, the Brahmin
Of soaring renown, he sojourned with them;
Love linked him with the great many devotees
That came there; poised in his service divine
And alive to its glory, he spent his days there. (1508)

244. (Thirunavukkarasar and the godly child)
Hymned many a decad divine in glorious
And magnificent Tamil; they felt happy;
They expatiated copiously on the glory of devotees
Who were devoted to the golden feet of the Lord
Who shares in His left Himavant's Daughter;
Their minds were oned with the Lord; it was thus, they
Enjoyed the fruit of dwelling in holy company. (1509)

245. During those days, desiring to render such service,
Fitting and divine, they were impelled to adore
The Lord of ruddy matted hair which dangles
Like clusters of lightnings, in His many shrines;
Hailing flowery Pukaloor dight with auric
And gemmy mansions, they left it. (1510)

246. Saintly Tiruneelanakkar, Sirutthondar, Murukanar
And other devotees of great and pure love, took leave
Of them and departed; the godly child and Vakeesar
Whose minds were oned with the Lord, reached
Tiruvambar of the Lord who conceals in His
Matted hair the Ganga that descended from the heavens. (1511)

247. They went to Tirukkadavoor rich in tanks
Where red lilies bloom, and hailed the auric feet
Of the Lord that smote cruel Death that rose up in wrath,
To death; Kunkuliya Kalaya Nayanar
Attended flawlessly to their needs, and they
In his sacred *matam* partook of nectarean food
With the servitors of Lord Siva. (1512)

248. They also hailed the Lord of Tirukkadavoor-Mayanam
Of ever-abiding glory, and hymned there
Many melodic and beauteous psalms and there
Abode in joy; they adored the twin feet of the Lord
Whose throat is like a nimbus, took leave of Him
And proceeded to Tiruvakkoor in whose
Beauteous streets chariots ply. (1513)

249. The Lord of Akkoor's shrine is *Tan-Tondri-Madam*
And its Lord is the refuge of seekers;
They adored Him in abounding love
And with flawless garlands of Tamil verse decked Him.
Then they visited the many shrines of the Lord
Whose matted hair waves in the wind,
And adored Him; then the two reached
Tiruveezhimizhalai of their Lord. (1514)

250. Tirunavukkarasar who came (first)
To Veezhimizhalai and the godly child of Seerkazhi
Were received by Brahmins and **servitors**
Of the Lord who is unknown to *Vishnu*-the wielder of disc,
In love that welled up from their hearts;
These adored them and they hailing these, moved in. (1515)

251. The Brahmins decked the mansions that stood
Circling the shrine; their thresholds and pials
Were decorated with plaintain trees, leafy areca trees
And beauteous lamps; they carried with them pots
Of holy water; the city flourished in greater glory;
Vakeesar whose glory for ever grows
And the godly child were thus received;
In sheer joy all of them fared forth to the temple
Of the celestial *Vimana*. (1516)

252. They moved into the temple where the Lord
Of Veezhimizhalai who wields as bow the ruddy auric hill,
Abides willingly; they circumambulated the shrine;
They adored Him from the entrance;
They moved in and came near the triple-eyed Lord
Of ruddy matted hair who rides the victorious Bull;
Vakeesar fell at His roseate feet, rose up
And trembled in sheer ecstasy. (1517)

253. Folding his hands he adored His feet;
Love in him began to melt; his eyes rained tears
On his body; then he hailed the Lord
In a garland of words which oped thus:
"They that reach not the Lord of ruddy matted hair
Reach but the evil way!" He hymned this
Redeeming *tandakam* and stood riveted in love. (1518)

254. Of yore, *Brahma* and *Vishnu* could not
Behold the crown or foot of the Lord who is verily
An auric hill of beauty; He is enshrined
In beauteous Veezhimizhalai with water well-endowed;
Him he hailed; unable to part from Him,
For many a day he hailed Him there;
The two *tapaswis* of truth and the servitors
Abode there where Brahmins abide. (1519)

255. After a few days when he thus throve
In sacred service, as rains failed, the *Ponni*
Of unfailing foison, ran dry; food grains that grow
By water became scarce; many lives caught
In this utter want, came to be immersed in misery;
Indigence spread everywhere. (1520)

256. When thus the world was involved in a famine
And men languished in misery, unto the godly child
And Tirunavukkarasar, with His hands displaying
The fawn and the *mazhu*, the Lord appeared in their dreams;
The Lord of ruddy matted hair who presides over
Tiruveezhimizhalai spake to them thus: (1521)

257. "The plight of times shall not afflict your thought;
Yet to give unto them that adore you, We give you!"
Thus He spake, and, even when they were beholding
The full glory of His form, He disappeared.
Unto each of the glorious two, the Lord of Veezhimizhalai
Granted a gold coin as the daily allowance,
And this was witnessed by the whole world. (1522)

258. On the eastern and the western *pitas* of the *Vimana*
That descended of yore from the heavens,
For the lord-patron of Pukali and for the lord
Of language, He placed a coin of gold as allowance
Everyday; the two could thus with numberless devotees
Partake of food there where they abode. (1523)

259. "By the grace of the Lord of the celestials whose throat
Has the tint of the dark night, manifold foison
Grows apace; may all the servitors of the Supreme
Gather here to eat." Thus by beat of tom-tom
They announced twice and fed all; chill penury
Was thus done away with. (1524)

260. He indeed is the holy son of the Lord who,
For the redemption of the world, drank the sacred milk
Of Himavant's Daughter's breasts, the Consort
Of the Lord of Veezhimizhalai; he was
Granted a coin which suffered a discount;
As Vakeesar was a servitor who rendered
Manual service, his coin suffered nothing in exchange. (1525)

261. By virtue of the coins granted as allowance by the Lord
In whose crown courses the river, the sacred *matams*
Of the two were endowed with endless provision;
When servitors ate in joy, interminable was the supply
Of food; the world acclaimed this growing glory;
As they spent their days in joy .... (1526)

262. The hostile days ended; rumbling clouds rained;
The flood cooled the world; food-grains grew;
Prosperity ruled; the two servitors -- the true cause
Of world's redemption --, hailed the Lord in garlands
Of words; they were then possessed with a desire to adore
The blue-throated Lord at His other shrines. (1527)

263. Adoring the great Ruby-of-Veezhimizhalai rare
And parting from Him in great reluctance,
They reached and hailed Tiruvanjiyam
And hymned melodic and liberating verse-garlands;
The two of endless glory then reached the outskirts
Of opulent Tirumaraikkadu. (1528)

264. In Tirumaraikkadu, pretty girls gather pearls
In the yards of saltpans girt with sweet gardens
Of *punnais* blooming with fragrant flowers;
They entered the temple of the Lord, who wields
The auric hill as His bow, and circumambulated it;
Then the prince of Pukali and the lord of language
Came before the divine presence. (1529)

265. In that shrine near the backwaters of the sea
The universal Vedas performed *pooja* for the Lord-Brahmin
On whose matted hair snakes do dance,
And securely barred the strong doors of the shrine;
From that day till this day the doors remained closed;
They adored those doors, immense and beauteous. (1530)

266. As none competent to open the door locked
By the hoary Vedas had, till then, come there,
Devotees performed *pooja* for the lord and adored Him,
The annihilator of troubles, passing through
A threshold nearby; they of endless glory great
Witnessed this and were also informed of this
By those who were there present. (1531)

267. Hearing of this, the prince of Tonipuram said:
"O father, be pleased to hymn and unbar the doors
Of the Lord of gods unto whom the lofty and sublime Vedas
Offered *pooja*, that we two may without let,
Straight proceed to worship Him." Thus told,
Glorious Tirunavukkarasar... (1532)

268. Prompted alike by his inner love and the gracious words
Of the godly child, sang the hymn beginning
With the words *Panni neru Mozhiyal*.
The Lord, the wearer of the pellucid Ganga desiring
To hearken to the sweets of the whole of the decad
Played the cunctator; at the close of the decad
When he sang thus: "You consider not; You are without mercy!" (1533)

269. By the grace of the True Ens abiding at the woodland of the Vedas
The gemmed doors lustrous oped wide before them,
The loving devotees; the lord of language and scriptures
Along with the *Muni* of Gnosis, adored Him and fell
Prostrate on the ground; the reboation of the celestials
And the Vedas far exceeded the roar of the seas of the world. (1534)

270. To the great delight of devotee-throngs,
The servitor ruled by the Lord and the cub of Siva,
Immersed in the flood of joy, moved into the presence
Of their Lord and bowed before Him; they hailed
And hymned Him in garlands of melodious verse;
Their minds and even their bones melted;
They worshipped Him and moved out reluctantly. (1535)

271. Vakeesar who stood without said: "That these doors
Which were oped by grace, might remain closed as before,
And the opening and closing might become customary,
You be pleased to hymn the closure of the gracious doors."
Thus he addressed the Kauniya of Pukali who partook
Of the breast-milk of Himavant's daughter mixed with Gnosis. (1536)

272. Even as the adept of Tamil, the ruler of Sanbai,
To honour the virtuous words of Tirunavukkarasar
Began his decad, by the grace of the Lord in whose forehead
Is a beauteous eye and whose throat is blue-hued,
Pat closed the doors; even when the first hymn was
Sung, the strong doors closed shut. (1537)

273. Beholding this, the godly son and the Lord's servitor
Grew happy; they said: "Thus are we by the Lord graced!"
They adored Him; then the godly child sang
And brought the decad to a close, adored
And bowed low; these doors of the threshold
Fronting the Lord came to be oped and closed
Every day since that day. (1538)

274. All the devotees wondered at the happenings; they were
Thrilled and the hair on their bodies stood erect;
Tears rained by their eyes washed their bodies;
They adored the feet of the two whose peers
Could be eyed nowhere; our great one of Seerkazhi
And Tirunavukkarasar then left for the *matam*. (1539)

275. Vakeesar ever poised in truth thought thus:
The doors would not open betimes when I hymned;
They closed shut with ease quickly, when he hymned;
Lo, I languished in my longing, not conning
The will divine of the Lord!" He grew sorry and was
Scared; he sought a corner of the *matam* and down
He lay there; he closed his eyes as in sleep,
But was in a state of awareness. (1540)

276. His mind meditated on the feet of the Lord,
Verily the Ruby of ever-abiding opulent Maraikkadu.
While thus he slept a conscious slumber, the Lord
Who shares Uma in His frame, blazing with the beauty
Of the Holy Ash on His frame, appeared
Before Him and bade him thus: "We will be
At Vaimoor; follow Us there!" (1541)

277. Thus illumined, he sang: "He said: 'Come'
And went away; what may this be?"
He rose up resolved thus: "If this be the grace
Of our Lord, I will hie, for sure." He left
The woodland of the Vedas and proceeded swift;
The Lord of all genesis led him in the very form
In which He manifested before him. (1542)

278. Tirunavukkarasar who left the glorious town
Was like one who could not quaff the nectar, though
One held it in the hand in boundless love;
The Lord of matted hair where the Ganga courses
Went before Him; he went after Him covering
A great distance; he could not reach
The glorious One maugre his efforts. (1543)

279. It looked as though He would give him *darshan* close by;
But then He only pointed to him a beauteous shrine
Into which He entered; the servitor who came
Chasing Him went after Him swiftly;
Of this the eternal prince of Pukali, heard,
And there arrived in all haste. (1544)

280. He grieved sore that He took him there making it
Appear that He was close by only to disappear;
"Maybe it is fair that You concealed Yourself from me
That caused the doors to ope, not comprehending
Your sacred intent; but yonder is he who is
Flourishingly poised in the prowess of servitorship
And who hymned the doors into shutting; Oh Lord!
Wherefore do you hide?" Thus sang he. (1545)

281. The Lord who was invisible to *Brahma* and *Vishnu*
Though they went in search of Him, manifested
Straight before the lord of Tiruppukali dight
With lofty mansions; he beheld the Lord that sported there,
And adored Him; he pointed to Tirunavukkarasu,
Who too beheld Him and hailed Him with the hymn
Which opened thus: *Pata atiyar*. (1546)

282. The Lord that gained the garlands of Tamil, vanished;
Then they reached glorious Tiruvaaimoor
And circumambulated the temple; the two great servitors
Of the Lord who wears the crescent,
Adored and hailed and hymned the Lord;
Their love for Him soared more and more, and they
Willingly sojourned in that town together. (1547)

283. The servitor ruled by the Lord sweetly sojourned
With the godly child there; devotion welled up
In him more and more; he hailed the feet
Of the Lord of Vaaimoor and decked Him
In loving devotion with verse-garlands; then
With the *muni* of Gnosis he returned to Tirumaraikkadu
And adored the feet of the Pure and purifying One. (1548)

284. He adored the Primordial Lord and there performed
Proper and possible service; when he thus abode there,
Some messengers from the flawless paragon
-- Pandi-Ma-Devi, the daughter of the white parasoled
Chola and consort of the Pandya king --,
And the chief minister Kulacchiraiyar
Came there seeking the prince of Pukali. (1549)

285. They came to the *matam* in Siva's Tirumaraikkadu
And had their arrival announced to the godly child;
Then they came to his divine presence and adored him.
He was happy to receive them and enquired of them
If they were free from trouble; then they said:
"You are the *avatar*, come to redeem the world!
Can trouble beset them that think on your feet twain? (1550)

286. "When the sempiternal Saivism, the way of the Vedas, is there
The Jains who are adepts in demonstrating
The false and base religion to be true, perform
Evil deeds galore; we can endure them no longer."
When the sacred Brahmin of Sanbai heard this
Up he rose invoking the Holy Ash, firm-resolved
To undo the working of the cruel ones and make
Resplendent the primordial Saivism. (1551)

287. Thus spake then Vakeesar to the hero of Pukali:
"The filthy, unwashed, diabolic Jains are great experts
In variform evil acts of truculent black art;
The evil deeds they did to me in the past were a legion;
Woe's me! I'll not suffer you to go there." (1552)

288. When he spake thus, the godly child said:
"I long to go forth to behold the two who hail
The glory of the Holy Ash infinite; there'll I
Unseat the Jains -- doers of evil --, and annihilate
Their way; I'll cause Saivism to flourish gloriously;
Till then I'll do nought else; behold this!
This is *your mandate* indeed!" (1553)

289. The godly child added further: "I am going
There for sure; you may please refrain from coming
With me; I'll myself extirpate all the deception
Of the Jains." He also spoke to him of all
That should be done in furtherance of his mission;
Unable to dissuade him, Tirunavukkarasar
Stayed there; love-borne the chief of Gnosis
Fared forth to the Tamil country. (1554)

290. When the prince of Venupuram was gone,
Vakeesar who took leave of him and there
Abode, hailed the Holy One that abode in love
At Maraikkadu, in melodic verse; he was then
Impelled by a desire to adore the feet of *Thanu*
Enshrined in Tiruveezhimizhalai. (1555)

291. He left the place with the leave and grace of Him
Of Tirumaraikkadu girt with gardens;
He resolved thus: "I'll go to Veezhimizhalai
Of Him, the Eater of the poison churned out of sea."
He adored at well-known Nakai-k-kaaronam
And other shrines and hymned pious psalms
In Tamil munificent, and arrived
At Tiruveezhimizhalai of the Lord. (1556)

292. He adored Veezhimizhalai reaching its outskirts;
He hailed in melodic hymns the Lord-Author
Of the Vedas enshrined beneath the *Vimana*
There brought by *Vishnu* -- the holder of the disc
In his right hand -- from the empyrean;
During his sojourn he was possessed by a desire
To adore the lord in His other shrines too. (1557)

293. He fared forth on the bank of the Kaveri rich in water,
Adored at the shrines and moved onward;
He reached Avaduturai where the Lord graced
His Consort who was in the form of a cow, and adored
His feet; there Tirunavukkarasar hailed
The act of the Lord who granted unto the partaker
Of Gnosis, a thousand coins of ruddy gold
For his hymns; thence he moved on, adoring many shrines. (1558)

294. When he reached Pazhayarai of the Lord
Of ruddy matted hair and moved in, he desired to adore
With folded hands, Lord-Siva in the Northern Shrine
Kept screened and concealed from others
By the deluded Jains; this he divined and on enquiry,
Was told that the *Vimana* there was a facade
Of the Jains; he could not endure this and grew heart-sore. (1559)

295. He went to a place near that pseudo-*Vimana*,
Meditated on the roseate feet of the Lord who wears
Fragrant petalled *konrai* blossoms and,prayed thus:
"The brainless Jains have caused a concealment
In deception; may You Oh Lord, be pleased
To extirpate their fraud. (1560)

296. "I'll not quit this place without beholding You
In Your true splendour!" Thus he addressed
His resolute prayer to the Lord, and Vakeesar
Who was bent upon the fulfilment of his wish
Remained there abjuring food; the Omniscient
Who knew of it, to help His servitor hail Him truly,
Appeared in the dream of the King of the realm
And firmly and duly apprised him of all. (1561)

297. "Having been concealed by the brainless Jains
We abide invisible to others!" Thus spake
The Lord and pointed to the king the marks
Of identification; then spake the Lord:
"That Tirunavukkarasu may duly adore Us
Destroy their unholy deception and expel them."
Thus graced the Lord the King; he rose up
And folded his hands above his head in adoration. (1562)

298. The king spake of the wondrous vision he had
In his dream to his ministers and with them
Hastened to that place and discovered the shrine
With the help of the marks indicated to him by the Lord
Of the celestials, and also the deception of the Jains;
He adored the sacred feet of Vakeesar who unearthed
Their foul-play; total did he their fraud uproot. (1563)

299. Like stubbles mashed by trampling tuskers
The assembly of the thousand Jains was pulverized
And the Jains were driven away; the lofty king
Raised a resplendent *Vimana* for the Lord;
He arranged for the daily *pooja*, lavishing
Endowments therefor and adored the Lord.
Tirunavukkarasar of godly wisdom moved
Into the presence of the Lord and hailed Him. (1564)

300. "Even though the Jains -- pluckers of hair
From their pates and mere eaters --, hide You by reason
Of their false and hare-brained plight
Can they truly conceal You?" Thus he hymned
His invaluable and truthful *kuruntokais;*
He moved out and sojourned there; then he
Proceeded to hail the many shrines of the Lord
Who wields the three-leaved trident. (1565)

301. He adored and hymned in garlands of Tamil verse
The Lord -- the Rider of martial Bull -- in all
His shrines situate on both the banks of the Kaveri
Coursing with swelling flood; received by devotees
Of universal renown and endless servitorship,
He came near Tiruvanaikka where abides
The Lord of the red-eyed Bull. (1566)

302. He adored the ankleted feet of the Lord
Who had bestowed grace on the spider and hymned
Many a garland wrought of sweet redeeming words;
He then adored at the hill of Tiruverumbiyoor
Where is enshrined the Lord of ruddy matted hair
And hymned Him; then he adored the Lord
At the effulgent hill of Tiruchirappalli and at the hill
Of Karkkudi, and fared forth to the prosperous
Tirupparaitthurai to adore Him there. (1567)

303. At that shrine and at other shrines nearby he adored;
There he rendered his handsome manual service
And hymned Him in decads divine; by His grace
He crossed the Kaveri and reached its other shore;
Then he fared forth to Tiruppaigngneeli, where
The Lord -- the wielder of the bow --, who burnt
The triple hostile cities, abode. (1568)

304. He grew sore and tired on his way; he languished;
Thirst and disabling hunger assailed him;
Yet he wasn't perturbed in mind; the lord
Of language moved on; the brow-eyed Lord
Who presides over Tiruppaigngneeli girt
With beauteous gardens desired to relieve the distress
Of His servitor. (1569)

305. The Lord who could not be eyed by *Brahma*
Who winged up as a swan, and also *Vishnu*
Who as a peerless hog burrowed the earth,
Caused a garden and a pool to materialise;
To act as his guide, He assumed the form
Of a *Brahmin* wearing the Holy Ash; He had
With Him food neatly packed and He awaited the coming
Of the unique lord of language. (1570)

306. When the king of servitors came near His presence
The Lord-Brahmin that rides the red-eyed Bull,
Addressed him thus: "You are very much fatigued
By reason of your long walk; I have with Me food
Neatly packed; partake of it; drink of the water
From this swelling pond; be refreshed
And then proceed on your way." (1571)

307. Knowing it to be the grace divine of the Lord
When the holy Brahmin offered him the packed-food
As though He were one already known to him
Tirunavukkarasar thought not of aught else;
He received it, ate it in relish, drank the water,
Washed his hands and feet and felt refreshed. (1572)

308. The Brahmin then addressed him who stood refreshed
Having been relieved of his fatigue, thus:
"Where are you bound for?" In reply Arasu said:
"I am on my way to Tiruppaigngneeli
Of the ineffable One." Hearkening to this the peerless One
Saying, "I too am going there" proceeded with him. (1573)

309. The great Brahmin who came with him, vanished
When they neared Tiruppaigngneeli; the lofty one
Of true askesis then burst into a hymn thus:
"O the great mercy of Him -- the Dancer --, who
Deemed even me worthy!" He sang, fell down,
Rose up and shed tears in ecstasy. (1574)

310. He reached the temple of Tiruppaigngneeli
Where the Supreme One is enshrined in grace,
Adored the Lord of the dark and beauteous throat
And felt delighted; in devotion true and melting love
He hymned adorable garlands of Tamil, rendered
Manual service divine and sojourned there in love. (1575)

311. He then fared forth to hills divine and shrines galore
Where the Lord abides in love and adored them in love;
He sang melodic hymns and psalms rich with boons;
By the grace of Ammai-Appar, Vakeesar moved northward
And arrived at Tiruvannamalai of the Primordial Lord. (1576)

312. He adored Tiruvannamalai whose Lord is
The Rider of the red-eyed Bull, and circumambulated it;
He ascended the great hill and adored the King
Of great Grace who straightway lavishes grace
On devotees that thrive in loving servitorship;
Bliss was his; thus did he demonstrate the glory
Of the *anubuti* of a life so blessed, to be
Even superior to *moksha*. (1577)

313. Him who is like a beauteous hill on a hill inaccessible --
The One who is like unto nectar
To beholding devotees steeped in insatiable love,
The One who devoured the uneatable venom
Of the main to save the celestials --,
He worshipped with a melting mind and hymned
Melodious decads of dulcet Tamil; he hailed Him,
Extolled Him and rendered service unto Him. (1578)

314. He hailed the feet of the Lord of matted hair
Whose jewels are snakes; when thus he served
Hailing him, he desired, in unabated love,
To adore and render fitting service for the Lord
In all His shrines on earth where He abides in joy;
Impelled by grace he moved onward
Towards the beauteous Tondai-Nadu divine. (1579)

315. Borne by a love to render service, he crossed
Hills and dales, forests and jungle-rivers, and many towns
Rich in mango-groves and cool fields;
The lord of logos thus reached the great Tondai-Nadu
Where he first visited Tiruvotthoor girt
With gardens rich in cool and soft blossoms. (1580)

316. The matted hair of the Lord glows crimson
Like the crepuscular sky; He is Lord of the celestials
Abiding at Tiruvotthoor; into His temple he entered,
Made his sacred round, adored Him before His
Divine presence; hymned and rained joyous tears;
He decked the Lord of triple eyes with divine *tandakams*
And other fitting garlands of words,
And stood poised in His service. (1581)

317. Having adored the Lord of the erubescent matted hair
Of Tiruvotthoor, he took leave of Him; thence
He visited the many shrines of the Lord
Who for the prosperous redemption of the worlds
Devoured venom, and adored Him there;
He then reached the outskirts of Kanchi
Girt with a great rampart and hailed by the whole world
As the shrine divine where the Lord grew lissom
When His Consort hugged Him close. (1582)

318. For the redemption of the world, him
The Lord of Tiruvatikai, by His great grace, afflicted
With a dire ache of stomach and straightway claimed;
We are graced with his arrival." Thus the citizens
Of Kanchi whose visages bloomed in joy
Like lotuses that burgeon in the morn,
Felt delighted in their minds. (1583)

319. In the streets dight with mansions and in all
Beauteous entrances they planted festoons;
Long-leaved plantains and bunches of areca
Were fastened; rows of pots filled with water
And blazing lamps were everywhere; they reared
Fragrant bowers where hung garlands woven with
Petalled flowers; streamers that wafted
In the wind were hoisted; thus they decked
The vast and beauteous city, Kanchi. (1584)

320. They blazed in their habit of servitorship divine;
They thronged to receive the lord of language on his way;
They had with them brooms divine and other
Serving tools -- unknown even to the celestials --, plied
In the service of the streets divine; these devotees of the Lord
Whose matted hair is decked with *Indai*-chaplets,
Received him in their strength. (1585)

321. He paid obeisance to the glorious servitors
Who adored and received him; Tirunavukkarasar,
The one ruled by the Lord whose beauteous neck
Is dark like the rumbling cloud, moved into the city
Of Kanchi girt with a fort, and reached
The temple of the Lord on whose matted hair
The celestial river descended in smashing leaps. (1586)

322. He prostrated before the Temple-Tower and rose up;
He moved into the opulent yard divine;
He made his sacred round of the beauteous shrine
Of *Ekampa Nathar*, the Lord of Genesis,
The Ruler of Kanchi; he beheld the Lord
Of Vita Immortalis whose golden frame grew supple
When the daughter of roseate and auric Himavant
Hugged Him; he adored Him and stood poised
In steadfast devotion. (1587)

323. Tears cascading from his eyes gushed in waves
On his frame, thrilled to its roots in every pore
Of hair; his bones were tossed with the waves
Of melting love; his eyes revelled in the bliss
Of vision divine for which they were created;
Becomingly enshrining Tiruvekampar
In his mind, he hymned Him. (1588)

324. "He is unknown to the deceptious hearts, all evil!"
Thus he oped his adorable decad, a garland
Of words divine; then he moved to the place
Beyond the divine yard of the Lord, the Rider
Of the Bull who burnt the triple cities of foes,
The Lord that wears as garlands white-fanged snakes. (1589)

325. Even when he was rendering with all his heart
The manual service divine with his *uzhavaram*
In great love, he also hymned variform decads,
Manifold and multifoliate; he made his
Sacred round at Kanchi-*Mayanam* of the Lord
Of dark throat and hailed it soulfully;
There he sojourned willingly. (1590)

326. He adored at all the shrines in great devotion
Commencing from Tirumetrali of the glorious city
Of fortressed Kanchi, where the Lord of matted hair,
Whence courses the Ganga, ever abides; he hailed them
And in choice blossoms of Tamil words wove garlands
And decked the Lord; rendering fitting service
He abode there. (1591)

327. As he thus abode there in that city, he came
To ever-during Tirumal-Peru and hymned in Tamil;
He visited many a shrine of the Lord in whose
Crest doth rest the crescent, and adored them;
Borne by love, great and perennial,
He returned to Kanchi. (1592)

328. There he hailed Him thus: "Behold *Ekampan!*
He is enshrined in my thought." He came
To the divine presence of the Lord who is concorporate
With His consort, the Rider of the beauteous-eyed Bull,
The Wearer of serpents as jewels, the One whose frame
Is smeared with the Holy Ash of ever-increasing weal. (1593)

329. Having adored the Lord of beauteous *Kacchi Ekampam*
He desired to adore the other glorious shrines
Of the Lord who sports on His matted and dense hair
The crescent; he passed through the region where crops
In fields are irrigated by the stream of honey
That gushes forth from the lush drupels.
Of jack-fruit, and came near Tirukkazhukkunru
Where the Lord that wears the hide
Of the pachyderm of strong trunk, abides. (1594)

330. He adored the Dancer's feet in glorious Tirukkazhukkunru
And composed many a garland of Tamil verse; he hailed
The Lord who wears the crescent in His crown in His
Many other shrines and reached Tiruvanmiyoor
On the shore of the great and vast sea. (1595)

331. Reaching Tiruvanmiyoor whose Lord is verily
The true panacea, he humbly adored its Lord
And hymned Him in Tamil of supreme and sublime truth;
He also adored in the nearby shrines of the Lord
Who ends the embodiments of lives;
The king of Tamil thus came to Mylapore
Girt with gardens rich in fragrant blooms. (1596)

332. Like peacocks that thrive in hills, clouds flourish
On the tops of mansions there; he adored
The feet of Lord Sankara at divine Mylapore,
A city glorious on earth; then the wielder of *uzhavaram*
Proceeded on the shore washed by waves
And reached Tiruvotriyoor. (1597)

333. Devotees poised in servitorship made the beauteous streets
Of Tiruvotriyoor, the lustrous city of uberty, still more
Resplendent; they decked it with streamers,
Garlands, bunches of areca and goodly plantains
In exquisite order; they filled with water
Pots of gold; they lit lamps and arranged them in rows;
They burnt frankincense; thus they received Vakeesar. (1598)

334. Tirunavukkarasar adored the entrance-tower
Of the shrine of Tiruvotriyoor where is enshrined
The Lord who wields the sturdy hill as His martial bow;
With devotees blessed with the wisdom of Oneness
He moved in and made his sacred round in melting love;
He folded his hands in adoration of the Lord
Who will, for sure, end the very name of embodiment. (1599)

335. He hailed the Lord *Ezhutthu Ariyum Peruman*,
He prostrated flat before the Lord and rose up;
His body thrilled in its every pore; his hair
Stood erect; his eyes showered tears and he
Experienced an ecstatic mysterium tremendum. (1600)

336. "Lotuses buzzed over by bees!" Thus he oped his divine
Tandakam which he hymned in melodic words;
Thus he hailed the Lord and in bliss beheld
The form divine of the Lord in whose matted hair
Courses the celestial flood, the Ganga; his hands
Folded in adoration; he then moved out. (1601)

337. He rendered service divine in the vast and beauteous
Yard resplendent; he sang many adorable
Kuruntokais and *Tiruviruttams* treasured by all hearts;
He melodised *Tirunerisais* in full throated ease;
He adored the Lord with his hands, and sojourned
In that city of foison for full many a day. (1602)

338. During his days of sojourn, he visited many
Beatific shrines of Siva and adored the Lord there
In love; Him of Tiruvotriyoor he hailed;
Blessed with His grace he departed from Tiruvotriyoor
Well-endowed with the wealth of water; he came
To Tiruppasoor the Lord of which shares Uma in His frame. (1603)

339. When he reached Tiruppasoor, the love in his mind
Began to swell as ardent devotion; for the deliverance
Of the world the Lord is there enshrined in a bamboo;
He adored the Lord who burnt the triple cities
Sparing in the process the lives of three devotees,
Prostrated before Him and rose up. (1604)

340. "He, the First One, burnt the triple cities of yore!"
Thus he oped the heart-melting hymn;
Songs in *Tirukkuruntokai*
Tandakam, metrical *Tirunerisai* full of rhythm
And other psalms in Tamil he melodised, and blessed
With the grace of Our Father he desired to march onward. (1605)

341. He left the beauteous town and adored the Lord
Whose throat is blue with the hue of poison
In all His nearby shrines in delight great;
He reached and adored Pazhaiyanoor Tiruvalankadu
Where abide the noble members of the glorious clan
Who never swerve from truth, ever-poised
In the way, lofty and sublime. (1606)

342. "He is the opulent One of Tiruvalankadu!"
Thus he hailed Him in ever-glorious *tandakam* great
And many other supremely truthful garlands of Tamil;
In great devotion, he hailed the Lord in the other
Shrines, and moved northward. (1607)

343. He crossed many towns, long ranges of hills
And jungles spreading thick, reached Tirukkarikkarai
And adored its Lord who confers on devotees the godly way;
The great king of hoary arts reached the great hill
Of Tirukkalatthi where throng celestials behind
Rows of servitors. (1608)

344. In the vast and divine waters of the divine river
Ponmukali he had his ablutions; he prostrated
At the foot of the hill-range of Kalatthi in worship,
Rose up, ascended the ever-during hill of the Lord
Who rides the red-eyed Bull, and made his sacred round. (1609)

345. He fell on the ground and adored the Lord who wears
A white ear-ring of chank; -- the Lord who is
Verily a shoot of the mountain, the Lord who is
The Genesis of the Vedas --, and rose up; his great
And loving mind and his eyes were steeped in joy;
Ecstatically he hymned the Lord thus:
"He abides in my eyes!" Thus he sang the divine *tandakam*. (1610)

346. Near unto the Lord who is the crest-jewel of the hill
Stands enshrined Kannappar whose strong hand wields
The bow; he adored His feet and his roseate feet
Together; tears flooding from his eyes cascaded
Down his frame; folding his hands above his head
He bowed, and then moved out of the shrine. (1611)

347. He rendered possible service in the divine hill sky-high
And adored on the hill the feet of *Thanu;* an inkling
Linked his thought with the divine Mount Kailas;
The master of truthful arts desired very much to behold
The great beauty and poise of the Lord at Mount Kailas. (1612)

348. He adored the Lord of the beauteous hill who is
The Remedy sure for the illth of embodiment;
Endowed full with His grace, in spiralling love
He moved northward; he crossed mountains great,
Forest-rivers and lands stretching continuously
And reached Sri Parvata where is enshrined
The Lord of the red-eyed Bull who is *Vishnu*. (1613)

349. *Vidhyataras* of great prowess, celestial *Devas*,
Yakshas who move in the eternal regions, *Kinnaras*
Who are celestial musicians, dwellers of *Naka -Loka*,
Kamacharis who can travel anywhere at will
And wise ones poised in Silence, here adore the Lord,
And are blessed with boons; he adored this divine hill
And hailed it in Tamil, magnificent and munificent. (1614)

350. He moved onward impelled by a love to adore
The Mount of Kailas the Lord of which wears
The garland of *Atthi* and wields the trident;
No other desire had he; wondering devotees flocked
To him and he crossed the Telugu country
And reached the realm of Karnataka. (1615)

351. He moved out of the limits of Karnataka and crossed
The interfluent woods, fords, beauteous and holy,
Rivers, long mountain-paths, countries that thrive
In great foison; these that defy number, receded
As he marched onwards; he came to the country
Of Malava rich in gardens of dense and stately trees
Over whose tops the sun wheels his diurnal rounds. (1616)

352. He crossed the whole stretch of that country and also
Forests, impassable; he passed through the land of Lada
Glorious for its eelymosynary *dharmasalas*
And crossed cloud-capped hills, forests and rivers
And reached the land of Madhya Pradesh rich in fields
Near which lotuses burgeon. (1617)

353. He crossed it and reached Varanasi, circled by the Ganga;
There he adored the Lord whose matted hair
Flashes like lightning; he left there
All the devotees that followed him;
Departing from the bank of the Ganga, the great
Lover of God -- the lord of language --, moved onward
And reached the sylvan range of hills. (1618)

354. The trees in the woods swept the very heavens; they were
Pathless woods inaccessible to men; yet as constant love
Was welling up in him, abjuring food even in the form
Of leaves, fresh or dried, tubers and fruits,
All alone he fared forth towards the huge mountain
Of the peerless Kailas; on he marched during night also. (1619)

355. When the loving one thus marched on, braving
The night, even wild beasts were afraid to come
Near him to cause him harm; cobras that would
Venom spit, held on their hoods gems for lamps;
He went through the forest in which even *Devas*
Would not venture to set foot as lone travellers. (1620)

356. In the forest, during mid-day fierce, the sun
Smote cruelly; its rays spread everywhere and the ground
Was full of fissures through which fire blazed
Even down to the bourne of the *Naka-loka;* the rays
Of the sun that invaded the hot shades in the fissures
Of the fiery and destructive wilderness, were thus
Flaming hot; yet he that was poised
In true, steadfast tapas marched on. (1621)

357. He thus marched on, night and day, through the wild
Wilderness and his lotus-feet upto ankles withered away;
Yet, would he detach himself from his thought fixed
On the argent mount where abides *Ammai-Appar?*
He leaped onward with the sole help of his hands twain. (1622)

358. His hands and wrists, disjointed, withered and wasted away,
Yet the great desire bred by his loving heart poised in truth
Grew more and more; the servitor of the blue-throated Lord
Prone on the dense gravel fiery whence smoke rose aloft,
Pushed his way with the aid of his chest. (1623)

359. The flesh on his chest wore away; the bones thereof
Were cracked and thrown out of joint; his whole body
Was a total wreck; yet impelled by the arodour of life
Sustained by a heart firm poised in its coveted ideal
And the enduring love that ached for the *darshan*
Of the Lord, the godly devotee
Rolled and rolled on his way in that forest wild. (1624)

360. Thus he rolled on the long way; his entire body wasted away;
His divine heart had truly reached the ineffable
Mount Kailas; he could do nought else as he could
No longer move slowly or gently as all the limbs
Of his body had withered away; so the leonine servitor
Of Tamil, lay on his way, undone. (1625)

361. The Lord would not bless him of such plight to reach
Kailas; to help him hail Him hereafter too, on earth,
In Tamil -- sweet and sempiternal --, the Supreme One
Who wears snakes for His jewels, in the habit of a *muni*,
Came walking, taking with Him a great pool of pure water. (1626)

362. He reached him and straight looked at him sorrowing;
The servitor too looked at Him; he then asked him;
"Why have you come here with all your limbs wasted away
And sore grieving, to this wilderness?" (1627)

363. The *Muni* was dressed in *valkala;* on His chest lay
The triple sacred thread; His crest of matted hair
Glowed with lustre; the Holy Ash blazed on His person;
The flawless devotee true looked at Him that regarded
Him kindlily; he was impelled to articulate
A few words by his inner consciousness. (1628)

364. Spake thus the great one: "O *Muni!* I am borne here
By a longing to worship in love the Lord of Kailas
In the north, the locks of whose Consort are buzzed
By bees; this indeed is my humble mission. (1629)

365. "Is the beauteous Mount Kailas easy of access
To the humans earth earthy? Even the celestials
Who wield weapons like sharp spears, cannot reach it;
Oh what folly is this that impelled you
To come to this wilderness, wild and hot?" Thus He. (1630)

366. "Your sole duty is to return." When the *Muni* on whose
Shoulder bright and body beauteous, lay dangling
The triple sacred thread, spake thus, he would not agree
With him; he but said: "Without beholding my Ruler
Enshrined in Kailas, I'll not return with this --
My death-bound frame." (1631)

367. Well aware of his resolutness, the *Muni* moved
And vanished into the heavens; with His unbodied voice
He addressed him thus: "O lofty and sublime
Navukkarasu, rise! "Thus bidden, up he rose
With a flawless body which glowed with a lustre rare. (1632)

368. "O Glorious One! My Redeemer and my Nectar true!
O Lord of the Gospels who, hid in the skyey expanse
Confers grace on me! The beauty of Your Majesty
As throned in the Kailas, I long to behold with my eyes!
May You mercifully grant me this beatitude!" (1633)

369. The Lord eyed the servitor that rose up after his obeisance
And with His grand ethereal words commanded him thus:
"Get immersed in this pool and behold the vision of Ours
As in Kailas, in great and flawless Tiruvaiyaru." (1634)

370. He wore as it were on his crown the grace of the Lord
Who rides the Bull, and adoring Him, hymned in love
The decad which oped thus: "He was other than the Empyrean
And the Empyrean too!" The devotee blessed with the puissance
Of grace, chanting the *Panchakshara* entered
The pool and into it immersed, as commanded. (1635)

371. Who can ever comprehend the glory of the divine grace
Of the Primordial Lord? The illuminant and *tapaswi*
Immersed into the pool of the snowy mountain
And rose out of a pond at Tiruvaiyaru where the Lord
Who is joyously concorporate with His consort Uma, abides;
The whole world wondered at it. (1636)

372. He ascended the bank of the tank where blows the breeze
Of flowery fragrance for ever; the divine grace of the Lord
Lit up the whole of his inmost consciousness; he said:
"Oh the mercy of the Lord!" He was now bathed by the pool
Of tears which gushed forth from his eyes twain. (1637)

373. The servitor was on his way to adore the roseate feet
Of the Lord of Tiruvaiyaru, the streets of which
Were rich in wafting streamers; all species of life,
Movable and immovable, companied with their mates,
Glowed alike there in that town in splendour;
This he beheld. (1638)

374. Even as the Lord is enthroned in the argent and divine
Mount of Kailas with His Consort, the liana of the auric
Mountain, He was beheld here too; all the variform beings
Were here very like the forms of *Sakti* and *Siva;*
Them did he thus behold, and adored; the great one
Of ever-during askesis then came before the Lord's temple. (1639)

375. The great temple in truth is the great Mount Kailas;
Vishnu, Brahma, Indra and other great *Devas*
Awaiting the darshan of the Lord hailed Him aloud
In song and prayer; this sound pervaded everywhere;
The Vedas of *Thanu* too chanted individually. (1640)

376. *Devas, Asuras, Siddhas, Vidhyataras, Yakshas,*
Tapaswis great and *munis* glorious stood thronging;
The numbers sung by Apsaras whose lily-blue eyes
Rolled like *Vaalai* fish, blending with the beat
Of *matthalas*, drowned the roar of the seven seas. (1641)

377. The Ganga, and all the great and divine rivers
Thither gathered as holy waters and hailed Him;
The great leaders of the hosts of Siva who were eyed
Everywhere, adored Him; *Bhootas* and *Vetaalas* hailed Him
With many a musical instrument. (1642)

378. They that gathered there thought that two indeed
Were in number the argent hills; thus stood the red-eyed
Bull who is *Vishnu,* in the forefront; *Nandi* who
Made his avatar in that holy town by reason
Of his *tapas* of yore, stood rejoicing in his stewardship,
Between the Rider of the Bull and the devotee-throngs. (1643)

379. The lord of logos beheld before him the Lord,
Verily a hill of coral blazing in great effulgence,
Enthroned, on the argent mount with His Jasper liana.
Even Him, the God of endless munificence whose left is
Shared by the daughter of Himavant great, he beheld. (1644)

380. He devoured with his eyes the sea of bliss beheld by him;
He folded his hands (above his head), fell prostrate
Before Him and rose up; his body quaked in ecstasy;
He danced; he sang; he wept; who can ever describe
What the holy servitor experienced in the presence of the Lord. (1645)

381. The *tapaswi* of endless askesis who was blessed
With a flawless love to partake of the nectarean grace
That he eyed before him, in soaring joy, hymned
The auric Lord of matted hair in adorable tandakams. (1646)

382. His mind was steeped in delight pure; the Lord with His
Consort was enthroned before him as in the Kailas;
Even as the holy devotee stood transfixed in adoration
The Lord made His beauteous vision as revealed
In Tiruvaiyaru recede far, far away. (1647)

383. As the Lord that revealed His form caused it to vanish
The servitor of the Feet divine stood bewildered;
He ached for the joy in which his soul revelled till then;
He thought: "This too, peradventure, is the grace of the Lord
Of ruddy matted hair!" He stood composed and in joy
Hymned his visioned experience for the deliverance
Of the world. (1648)

384. His decad oped thus: "The Lord whose Consort is
The daughter of Himavant wears a chaplet, wrought
Of the beauteous crescent." He hymned many a divine
Tandakam of flawless Tamil verse and made known
The message thus: "At Tiruvaiyaru I beheld
All species of life -- moving and stationary --,
Reach the Lord-Author of the Gospels, companied
With their consorts." Hailing thus, there he stood rapt. (1649)

385. He beheld the Lord, adored Him and hailed
The brow-eyed One with divine *tandakams*,
Kuruntokais, *nerisais* and *virutthams* galore;
Singing, adoring and rendering service divine,
He sojourned at Thiruvaiyaaru presided over
By the Lord of the celestials. (1650)

386. From that ever-abiding town, he visited many
Lofty and sublime shrines commencing from
Tiruneitthaanam and adored there; he hailed
The Lord of Tirumazhapadi and decked Him
With holy garlands of Tamil verse, and rendered service;
Hailing the Lord inaccessible to *Vishnu* and *Brahma*
He arrived at Tiruppoonthurutthi. (1651)

387. There arriving, he moved into it in love,
Came to the shrine of the Lord Dancer, made
His sacred circuit and worshipped the Lord;
In loving devotion he prostrated before the Lord;
The inseparable love with which his heart was full,
Began to swell and soar more and more;
His eyes rained tears; of himself he was oblivious. (1652)

388. He hymned his loving *tantakams* thus: "I have
Beheld the Lord of ruddy matted hair, enshrined
At Tiruppoonthurutthi; He is the Rider of the hill-like
Bull; He is the One never false!" Impelled by love
He hymned the *Kuruntokai* whose import is:
"We abide at the Feet divine!" (1653)

389. Divining the will of the Lord that he should there
Abide, he hymned the Lord in the adorable decad
Of swelling Tamil verse thus: "We hail the Feet!"
Rendering service he sojourned there; by the grace
Of the Lord, he raised there a *matam* divine
Laved by the rays of the moon and the sun. (1654)

390. Variform *tantakams*, unique *tantakams* of adoration,
Divine *tantakams* which enlist the holy shrines
Where the Lord who does away with misery, abides,
Tiru-Anka-Malai which reveals the way of deliverance
And innumerable tokai-decads, he hymned
And thus he hailed Him and there abode. (1655)

391. Meanwhile the godly Brahmin-child of Sanbai city
Having shattered into smithereens the doctrines
Of stony-hearted *Samanas* cruel, made straight
The stoop of the Pandya and blessed him with grace,
And having achieved the spreading of the splendour
Of the Holy Ash, was then proceeding to Poonthurutthi
Girt with the Kaveri, where Vakeesar was sojourning. (1656)

392. The godly child arrived at the land enriched
By the *Ponni* of foison, from the Tamil land sweet;
He heard of the sojourn of Vakeesar at Poonthurutthi
And resolved thus: "I'll hasten to meet him."
He arrived at the outskirts of that fecund town. (1657)

393. Having heard of the coming of the master of Tamil
Of Sanbai, Vakeesar of great glory -- hailed
By the whole-world --, rejoiced; impelled by a love
To adore him and feast his eyes with the joy
Of his sight, he fared forth to receive him
With a mind steeped in delight great. (1658)

394. The prince of Sirkazhi was on his way; there
He came and melted into the holy throng;
The loving servitor who was in its thick, adored him
Unseen; he then resolved thus: "The beauteous palanquin
Decked with pearls bears him that hath come to confer
Deliverance; I'll bend this body and bear it." (1659)

395. Unseen by any one and incognito, he joined
The bearers of the beauteous palanquin of pearls
That bore the godly Brahmin-child of *Pukali*;
With them he bore it; great was his rejoicing;
None could recognise him at all. (1660)

396. When the saintly child -- the great *muni* of Gnosis --,
Neared Tiruppoonthurutthi, he asked: "Where indeed
Is Appar?" Vakeesar, melting in love, replied thus:
"Your servitor, blessed with the beatitude
Of bearing your feet divine is (only) here." (1661)

397. Hearing this, down he descended impetuously;
Scared and agitated he adored the king of servitors;
Even before he would adore him, Vakeesar, the divine
Patron, adored him; all the devotees of the Lord
Whose hand displays a leaping fawn, hailed them
And uproarious was their acclamation. (1662)

398. The prince of Kazhumalam graciously companied
With him; he adored the flowery feet of the Lord
Of Tiruppoonthurutthi over whose gardens floats
The lovely moon, -- the Lord whose hands divine
Sport the *mazhu* and the fawn; he adored Him
In melting love and grew delighted; he hailed Him,
And there abode with Vakeesar. (1663)

399. Vakeesar of immaculate glory hearkened
To the rare *tapaswi* who narrated to him how he
Vanquished the cruel Samanas in disputation,
How he cured the hunch-backed Pandya
And how he in the land made rich by the cool waters
Of the Tamparaparani, caused the spreading of the glory
Of the Holy Ash infinite. (1664)

400. Of the compassion great of the Pandyan's Consort
Poised in virtue and glory and of Kulacchiraiyar's devotion
The lord of Gnosis so enchantingly narrated
To Vakeesar of endless glory that he desired to fare forth
To the Pandya kingdom, resplendent on earth. (1665)

401. Tirunavukkarasar of spiritual puissance told
The divine *muni* of Brahmapuram that he should
Hail the Lord in all His shrines of great *Tondai Nadu.*
Thereupon the godly child adored
The Lord of Tiruppoonthurutthi who burnt
The triple cities, and left the town. (1666)

402. The kingly servitor blessed with the great grace
Of the Lord, left the town and moved southward
To reach the Pandya country; he adored the Lord
At Tirupputthoor, rapturous to behold; he came
To Tirualavai of Madurai whose streamers
Waft aloft touching the moon. (1667)

403. He moved in and came to the shrine of the Lord
Who presided over the Academy of Tamil, making it
Perfect in the company of perlustrating poets;
He made his sacred circuit and adored the Lord
From the outer shrine; moving in, he hailed
The Lord of the great and puissant Bull who is
Vishnu, and was steeped in joy. (1688)

404. Immersed in nectarean bliss he hymned the Lord
Of matted hair thus: "Lo, He self-manifested!"
Thus sang he, the *tapaswi*, in exquisite Tamil
His *tandakam;* desiring to emerge out of the shrine
He adored the Lord with folded hands;
His holy mind revelled in bliss. (1669)

405. The glorious Queen of the Pandya, the King
Who had his hunchback cured by taking
To the way of the Holy Ash and Kulacchiraiyar
Extolled by the world, adored the feet divine
Of Vakeesar in love insatiate; thus hailed
By them he there abode. (1670)

406. He adored the red-rayed Lustre enshrined
At Tirualavai, the Lord-Grantor of the splendorous work
Of rich import; he hymned Him in divine *tandakams,*
Tirunerisais, and other great and truthful decads
Of Tamil; he rendered service with all his heart;
Then came he to Tiruppoovanam whose Lord
Reduced to cinders the triple skyey cities. (1671)

407. At Tiruppoovanam from whose mansions waft
A forest of flags, he was blessed with a *darshan*
Of the manifested presence of the Lord, unknowable
To Vishnu even; he adored Him and hailed Him
With the *tandakam* which oped thus: "Behold Him
Of the beauteous trident!" He left the town
And visited many a shrine of the Holy One whose
Frame divine is smeared with the Holy Ash. (1672)

408. His thought hovered on the Lord decked with pigngnaka
Who delivered prince Rama from his sin
Of decapitating the ten heads of Ravana of Sri Lanka
In the south; great joy possessed him; with a mind
Melting in love, the lord of logos prostrated before
The Lord and rose up. (1673)

409. He stood before the First One peerless, hailed
By the celestials -- Lord Sankara of Sri Rameswaram --,
And in words surcharged with devotion, Him
He hymned in *Tirunerisais* and other forms of verse
In Tamil; rendering service divine which ushered
Growing weal, Vakeesar there abode. (1674)

410. He abode there; blessed with the grace of the Lord
Who sports an eye in His forehead, he left the town
And visited Tirunelveli girt with fields, in the land
Divine of swelling Tamil, Tirukkanapper of the Lord
Whose red-eyed mount is *Vishnu* and all other shrines
Where the Lord abides, and adored Him. (1675)

411. Adoring the Lord, in multifoliate forms
Of rich Tamil verse, he hailed Him; he rendered
Flawless service; his mind melted in love;
His eyes rained ceaseless tears; he was poised
In an awareness of chinta knit to the feet of Siva. (1676)

412. He travelled throughout the land of Tamil sweet,
Dight with pleasant gardens, and adored the Lord
Whose jewels are snakes, in His shrines; he came
To the land of the *Ponni*, revisited the shrines situate
In the wealthy towns girt with uberous waters
And adored the Lord there; then the annihilator
Of the falsity of bondage, arrived at flowery Pukaloor. (1677)

413. He adored the feet of the Holy One abiding
At flowery Pukaloor dight with pools formed by nature;
With a melting mind and in devotion deep
He daily rendered manual service in the courtyard
Divine of the shrine; he abode there in love
Hymning numerous garlands of Tamil verse
Surcharged with the message of deliverance. (1678)

414. Divine *tandakams* which hail the sempiternal Lord,
Tani-tandakams of great glory, divine *tandakams*
Which hail and enlist the shrines of the Lord
Of (Tillai's) forum, contrite *nerisais* on the Lord
Of matted hair who wears *konrai* blooms.
Adorable *nerisais* and decads such like, he sang. (1679)

415. The decad of *Ar-uyir-Tiruviruttham*,
Quintessential *Dasa-Puranam*, the decad
Of *Pava-nasam* hailed by the whole world,
Divine decads straight apostrophising the Lord
And other decads, he hymned extolling the Lord,
Verily the Grantor of grace that is immense as the sea,
To His servitors. (1680)

416. As thus the kingly servitor rendered service there,
To demonstrate the sublime state in which
He was established, the Lord in His grace, caused
Gold and ninefold gems dazzle in the beauteous courtyard
Of the shrine, wheresoever he plied his *uzhavaram*. (1681)

417. The ruddy gold and ninefold gems filled the heavens
With their lustre rare; our lord, Tirunavukkarasar,
With his *uzhavaram* scooped them with the gravel
In the courtyard and alike threw them away,
Into the temple tank where fragrant and soft
Lotus-flowers glistened. (1682)

418. 'Tis but words which mark things as grass and stones,
As gold and gems; beyonding this he was poised
Firm in the supreme state of non-differentiation;
Before him the holy servitor, by the grace of the Lord
Of Tiruppukaloor, descended down from the heavens
Damozels whose brows put to shame the bows. (1683)

419. Like lightnings of the sky they came down
Flashing beauty; nectarean airs which issued
Tunefully from the *kendras* of music
In golden notes of linked sweetness, flowed
From their glowing lips of ambrosial fruitage;
Their lily-eyes burgeoned as they melodized. (1684)

420. Their feet soft as the shoots of the celestial *Karpaka*
Moved in nimble dancing rounds; their hands
Whose fingers were verily roseate buds of *kantal*
Swayed, swung, locked and unlocked in artful postures
Of dance; their battling eyes carp-like, moved
And rolled, in keeping with the movement
Of their comely hands; like auric lianas wondrous were they
That there danced lissom. (1685)

421. They danced, sang, showered flowers and would
Come near as though they would have union;
They would unloosen their braided locks
And with their hips swaying lithe, would gently trot;
Back would they come companied with the God of Love;
In growing splendour they would cause their long garments
Strategically slip in impassioned love. (1686)

422. When the heavenly Apsaras disported thus
In varied wanton gambols, the lofty one of sublime *tapas*,
Ever-poised in the truthful awareness wrought
Of melting love that links irremovably his thought
With the feet of the Father, plied himself
In divine service with unwavering *chittham*. (1687)

423. Addressing them -- the embodied twyfold deeds
Which would push one into the bewildering sea
Of birth and death --, he said: "What is it that I lack
That you should fulfil it? I am a servitor
Of the Lord of Tiruvaroor." This said, he hymned
The divine *tandakam* which oped thus:
"This ocean great of bewildering falsity." (1688)

424. The Apsaras, nathless, neared him and indulged
In all libidinous deceits resorted to by the lust-borne;
Unable to shake him from his peak
Of undifferentiated oneness, and totally stymied,
They adored him and from him departed. (1689)

425. All the seven worlds coming to know of this, his state,
Hailed him to gain that beatitude; Vakeesar has
Now the very form of loving *bhakti* ever-during;
The time for getting oned with the Lord whose matted hair
Dazzles like lightning, -- the Ens Entium --, drew near;
He there abode for a few days. (1690)

426. His consciousness, will and deed which direct
His inner sensorium had oned with Him; he hymned
Many a divine viruttham, impelled by his past good, thus;
"The Lord of Pukaloor would sure for ever keep me
That had taken refuge in Him, under His redemptive feet." (1691)

427. He hymned the ever-during *tandakam* divine
Hailed by all the worlds inclusive of this earth, thus:
"O Holy One! I am coming to Thee!" He completed
The decad; his form was now that of Siva's blissful
Gnosis, seldom accessible; the kingly servitor ruled
By the Lord came to abide for ever under the roseate feet
Of the Supreme One. (1692)

428. On the *Sadayam* day of *Chitthirai* his ascension
Took place; the heavenly ones showered flowers
Which overflowed and filled the earth; the five
Celestial *tuntupis* resounded in the realms ethereal;
All lives from Brahma onwards
Were filled inly with great joy. (1693)

429. The humble servitor that I am, I historicised
The life of godly Tirunavukkarasar, adoring
That divine *muni's* roseate feet-very like soft
Fragrant flowers-, as it lay within my knowledge;
Adoring him as before and blessed with his grace,
I will now narrate the servitorship of Kulacchiraiyar
Which is truly glorious and boundless. (1694)

Stanza Line

1 Tirunavukkarasu : The supernal lord of Logos.

Vakeesar : The King of speech.

He was named Marulneekki (Remover of flaw and nescience) by his parents; he was given the name Dharmasena by the Jains; he was named Tirunavukkarasu by Lord Siva; he was called Appar by st.Thirugnana-Sambandhar.

In his former incarnations he was Suthapa and Vakeesa.

2 It looks as though that the very buildings in this holy land, like Siva, wear the moon in their crest. Siva-saroopam is thus indicated.

There is a pun on the word"tukal". It means (1) dust and (2) defect or flaw. The dust of the soil is no defect of the soil. Indeed it is that which makes for its fecundity. It is, to borrow the words of Tagore, "healthy dust."

3 Siva is adorned by a river; so too is this hloy land. The flow of the river is to be likened to the flow of the Lord's grace.

5 5-6 Freshes ever flow amain and damage the sluices.

7 3 Koontal means : (1) the crest of an areca-tree;
(2) the coiffure of a woman.

12 Sivam : Here it means Saivism.

45 Evil past : The result of evil deeds done in past life or lives.

71 1 Deathless decad : Saivites believe that his decad is a sure remedy for all aches that afflict the bowels. This will be recited so long as Tamil is spoken in any quarter of the globe.

2 Cruel and kind : Lord Siva was cruel to our Saint only to be kind. It is common knowledge that the punitive act of the parent is in the interest of the child.

5 Life and Grace : Real living commenced for our Saint only after this event. Thus he understood the grace of the Lord to be.

6 "And chiefly Thou O Spirit, that dost prefer
Before all temples, th' upright heart and pure."

- Pradise Lost, Book I, Lines 17-18.

8 Clear wisdom. With the advent of grace, the mind and intellect of our Saint was clarified. Wisdom in the çontext means Godly knowledge. Compare the words of Vali to Rama on the eve of his death.

The accuser Vali turned a worshipper when God endowed him with "Pati Gnanam". He said:

Unto me, the cur of a slave, at the hour of death,
You, by grace, granted wisdom."

72 1 cf. (i) "......Quivering frame
I clasped adoring hands; my heart expanding like a flower
Eyes gleamed with joy and tears distilled."

- Tiruvachakam, Tr.G.U.Pope.

(ii) "With floods of gushing tears, and frame with transport filled, in joy and love" Ibid.

4-5 Flood of Your Grace:

Our Saint had fallen into a pit. By his effort, it was impossible for him to

climb up. God flooded the pit with His grace. As our Saint had shed his I-ness and My-ness, he became light as a feather and could float. As the flood-level gradually rose he too rose up and eventually got out of the pit.

7 Do I merit this? The eternal question of every reformed soul.

73 2 Disguised as truth:

The motto of Jains is "Yes and No." Lack of certainty is the breeding-ground of falsehoods. Their very austerity, rigid and inflexible, was nothing but puffed--up flasehood. With them the cowl never made the monk. Theirs was a religion perpetuated by clouded definitions and bogus values. They would rather hang themselves than correct their false moralisms and occult inaccuracies.

4 The intolerant Jains:

The religious intolerance of the Jains during the time of our Saint knew no bounds. Even to see or hear of a non-Jain was pollution for them. Their concept of "Kandumuttu" and "Kettumuttu" has no parallel in the world, for rank acerbity.

6 Debt of gratitude:

Can ever man render adequate thanks to the Lord or His grace? The only thing he can do is to adore. Our Saint now clarified in intellect realised that the cruel ache was but a *Deus ex machina*. It could not therefore be requited. It could be and ought to be, adored.

When the Brahmin conveying the message of Rukmini to Sri Krishna returned to inform her of his successful mission, she only fell at his feet and worshipped him.

Saivites consider that the entire world of Saivism owes a great debt to the ache of our Saint. It was indeed no malady but truly a remedy.

77 Uzhavaram is a spud-like instrument.

104 The doctrine enunciated in Jeevaka Chintamani, a Jain work, is: "Nalvinai udaiya neerar nanju unin amuthamakum; allathel amuthu nanjaam."

(If worthy men of piety eat poison, it will be but nectar; for others even nectar is poison). It is strange that the Jains would not respect their own doctrine.

A Niti-Sastra of Tamil says: "Watei cosumed by snake turns into poison; by cow into nectarean milk. Even so, knowledge of the wise is light and knowledge of the base is delusion."

The culture of Saivism as demonstrated by Tirunavukkarasu is the one adumbrated by the sacred Kural which says: "Those who desire to be styled the very pink of courtesy will drink off even the poison that hath been mixed for them before their own eyes."

The decad sung by Tirunavukkarasar on this occasion is unfortunately lost. However the Thevaram hymn beginning with the words: "Thunjirul kalai..." contains an unmistakable reference to the event.

Readers may find a parallel in the life of Socrates who however died of the poison.

112 The eight elephants that guard the cardinal points are:

(1) Airavata in the east, (2) Pundarika in the south-east, (3) Vamana in the south, (4) Kumuta in the south-west, (5) Anjana in the west, (6) Pushpadanta in the north-west, (7) Sarvabhooma in the north and (8) Supradipa in the north-east.

115 Sunna Venn cantana Santu : These words mean: "Holy white ashes and sandal-paste."

Our translation is in keeping with the original in which the historical present tense is resorted to by St.Sekkizhar.

121 Mutti : The practice of mantric incantation.

126 Sol Tunai Vetiyan : The Lord is the Author of the Gospels which ever abide aidant.

130 Varuna : The marine God.

The prayer of the Rg.Veda quoted below can be seen to be full of significance in this context.

"Loosen the bonds, O Varuna, that hold me, loosen
the bonds above, between and under."

Book I, Hymn XXIV, 15, Tr.R.T.H.Griffith.

131 The Lord of the Logos : Tirunavukkarasu.

147 Manifold service : Service by thought, word and deed.

161 Boundary : The inner boundary of the city.

165 5 Thiru Anukkan Tiru Vayil Gopuram.

187 The house of a holy person is called a matam.

190 Inasmuch as the Lord is said to abide during day at Tirutthurutthi and at night at Velvikkudi, both the shrines are deemed to be one only.

196 Moist feet : When celestials that are decked with honied chaplets fall at the feet of the Lord and adore Him, His feet get wet with the honey that gushes forth.

249 7-8 They did not come to Tiruveezhimizhalai together. St.Appar would proceed and reach the place of pilgrimage first, Then the godly child would arrive there in his palanquin. See stanza 527 of the Puranam of Tirugnanasambandhar.

290 Thanu : The pillar, The pillar of Fire; Lord Siva.

335 The first line of the original contains a beautiful oxymoron. Siva is here called 'The Lord that knows the words." The words (of the Gospels) however are unindited.

363 Valkala : A garment made of the bark of trees.

394 The word "thazhum udal" in the original may not mean, "the base body." St.Appar deliberately wasted his body away in his pilgrimage to the Kailas. Stanza 1632 informs us that in the range of the Himalayas he was blessed "with a flawless body which glowed with a lustre rare." Since then, his was a frame divine, one that was ethereal. The late-lamented Kudantai Sundaresan once told us that St.Appar was very tall in appearance. Sambandhar the child was about four feet six inches or so in height at the time relevant for us. The palanquin granted to him, when he was a child, would have been a pretty small one. If St Appar should bear it, he had to bend his body low.

412 Pukaloor means "The town of Refuge".

427 3 cf. "I will arise and go to my Father"

St.Luke, XV.18.

27. The Puranam Of Kulacchirai Nayanar

"I am a servitor of the servitors of Kulacchirai,
the Peru Nampi."

- The *Tiru-th-Tonda-th-Tokai.*

1. In hoary, goodly and glorious Pandyan country
Hailed by the great is a town of ever-abiding foison
Called Manamelkudi; it is rich in paddy-fields;
Sugarcanes thrive there; near them grow areca trees thick. (1695)

2. The leader of the great town was he, hailed
By *Van-Tondar* as peerless *Peru Nampi;* he was
Kulacchiraiyar of ineffable glory; firm-poised
In pious servitorship, he would not swerve therefrom. (1696)

3. As devotees are to Siva dear, he would fall
At their feet in inner love and feel happy; he would
Before them fold his hands in adoration,
And address them with words of coolth married to piety. (1697)

4. Be they of four marked varnas or those
That swerved from their way; if they be endowed
With the knowledge of servitorship to Sankara
He would, with all his heart, adore and hail them. (1698)

5. May the world hail them for their virtue or condemn them
For their endless evil; if they be the servitors
Of the Lord on whose matted crest the crescent doth rest,
He would fall prostrate on the ground and hail them. (1699)

6. A whole throng of pious men might visit him
Or just one of them, with intent to get fed;
He would receive them in spiralling love
And provide food in love and devotion true. (1700)

7. He would daily hail the feet of those that wore the holy ash,
Kovanam and *rudraksha* and who humbly chanted
In tongue-worship the *Panchakshara* of the primal Lord;
This marked his culture of piety. (1701)

8. Such was his righteousness; he was superior to all
The ministers of Nedu Maran, the Pandya king
Of endless glory; he was an annihilator of foes;
He was firm-poised in the way of deliverance. (1702)

9. Thus he throve; he would, for ever, chant the glory
Of the divine feet of the Lord in whose crown the Ganga
Courses; unto the service of Pandi Maa Devi who
Spread the glory of the Lord, he was a servitor true. (1703)

10. To averruncate the falsity of the Samanas of ill-repute
And cause the Pandya country hail the glory
Of the holy ash, he adored the auric feet of the godly child,
-- The patron Saint of ever-during Seerkazhi --,
With his head and was blessed with happiness true. (1704)

11. Have I truly hailed him at all who, to rid evil, had
The Samanas vanquished in disputation and had them executed
On the firm-fibred *kazhu*? Well, I'll now narrate the glory
Of Kurumpar's feet of Mizhalai, abounding in Vedic piety. (1705)

Stanza Line

'Peru Nampi' was a title in olden days. The word 'Nampi' means: "A gentleman par excellence."

28. The Puranam Of Perumizhalai-k-Kurumpar

"I am a servitor of Perumizhalai-k-Kurumpar"
- The *Tiru-th-Tonda-th-Tokai.*

1. Perumizhalai in the land of Mizhalai is rich
In groves of mango trees, bunchy coconut trees,
Jack fruit and areca trees (and is girt with fields);
The streets thereof blaze with the lustre of the holy ash;
It is a hoary town renowned for its citizens established
Unswervingly in the way of Vedic piety. (1706)

2. Mizhalai-k-Kurumpar was the prince of the hoary and holy place;
He would receive the devotees of the Lord who wears
The crescent in His crest and do untold, all services
Required by them by sheer divination; it was thus
He came by the fruit of his mellowing knowledge. (1707)

3. Endless was the food he provided for the devotees
Who came in throngs; he would confer on them all
Wealth immense humbly; he enshrined
In his lotus-heart the roseate flower-feet of the Lord
The locks of whose Consort are buzzed over by honey-bees. (1708)

4. As he thus throve for the world to come by a knowledge
Of the infinitude of divine servitorship, he hailed
As ordained the *Tiru-th-Tonda-th-Tokai* inseparable from the minds
Of devotees; he hailed its author Nampi Aroorar;
Blessed with the grace of the Lord he was stablished
In the worship of His divine feet. (1709)

5. With his hands he adored, with his tongue he hailed
And with his mind he meditated the feet of the lord
Of *Paravai* whose great eyes were tinct with collyrium;
Thus he throve. "This indeed is the path of deliverance
Leading to the auric feet roseate unknown to the lord
Of Lakshmi, and Brahma too!" Thus he thought
And thus he lived in unison with his faith. (1710)

6. By virtue of his quotidian chanting of the name
Of Nampi Aroorar, he became a master of the *siddhis*
Eightfold, commencing from *Anima;* thereafter
As his devotion grew multifold, he attained the beatitude
In which only *Panchakshara* -- the name of the First One
Constituted his kith and kin, wealth and consciousness. (1711)

7. As thus he flourished, *Van-tondar* who was claimed
By the Lord -- whose banner sports the Bull, and who walked on earth
His beauteous and divine feet touching it, and who also
Vanquished him in His lis against him, by flourishing
A deed of palm-leaf before the assembly --,
Came to Kodungkoloor the tops of whose mansions
Tocuhed the very moon. (1712)

8. *Van-tondar* hymned in garlands of Tamil verse
The nectarean Lord of Tiruvanjaikkalam who devoured
Venom; by the grace of the Lord of celestials, it was
Clear to him that he was to reach thence Mount Kailas
In the north; the heart of Mizhalai-k-Kurumpar conned this
Clearly even when he was here in his far-away town. (1713)

9. "*Van-tondar* of Tirunavaloor, renowned on earth,
Is reaching the inaccessible Kailas divine on the morrow;
Parted from him I will not languish like them
Who still continue to live having lost the pupils
Of their eyes!" Thus resolving he said: "I will attain
The feet of Lord Siva this day itself by *yoga.*" (1714)

10. All his four inner organs became one; pure consciousness
Streamed through *suzhu-munai;* by cultivated *yoga*
Pranava caused the opening of *Brahmarantra;*
Through this his spirit coursed its way to the Kailas
To the feet of the Primal One even before Nampi Aroorar
Could there arrive. (1715)

11. Adoring the feet of Mizhalai-k-Kurumpar who reached
The feet of the Lord of Mount Kailas, by his constant
Yogic exercise, never to part from the feet of the lord
Of *Paravai*, I proceed to narrate the glory
Of Karaikkal Ammai whose mien soft excels
Even that of the peafowl and whose words excel
The sweet melody of the kuyil. (1716)

29. The Puranam Of Peyar (Karaikkal Ammaiyar)

"I am a servitor of Peyar"

- The *Tiru-th-Tonda-th-Tokai.*

1. Whorled chanks are wafted by waves and deposited
Into adjacent backwaters; they roam there as growing wealth;
Such is Karaikkal the city of great merchants galore
Who are poised in honour and *dharma*, and are
Flawless, glorious and truthful. (1717)

2. By virtue of the *tapas* of Dhanadatthar who was
The chief of the mercantile clan of Karaikkal
Near whose sea-shore ply thick the merchant vessels,
Punithavathiyar of swelling pulchritude came to be
Born as his daughter even as an *avatar* of Lakshmi. (1718)

3. She was born that the mercantile clan might flourish
Resplendent; even as a child in the *parva* of toddling gait
When her soft feet were decked with lustrous jewels,
To attain valiancy in the servitorship of the Lord
Whose jewels are snakes, she cultivated words
That would cause her inly love boundless soar up. (1719)

4. Her opulent father duly performed all the sacred rites
Pertaining to the *parvas* of the growing child
To the great delight of his kith and kin, vast and great;
The child grew admired by all, like a shoot, comely
And lovely; she was linked in devotion deep
With the Lord whose mount is the Bull. (1720)

5. Even as she gambolled she would but articulate divinely
Words pleasing to the God of the celestials -- the Wearer
Of the crescent on His *matted hair* --; *she would* adore
His servitors when they passed by; thus she grew
Extolled by her nurse; now came the *parva* when
Her willowy waist began to languish, *unable*
To bear the weight of her twin-breasts. (1721)

6. She was perfect in every limb as defined by the authors
In their works on Anatomy; her queenly grace grew
Day by beauteous day; she was now in the *parva*
When she was not suffered to cross
The threshold of her house; now came men belonging
To the hoary tralatitious mercantile clan
Broaching connubium. (1722)

7. To the well-endowed city of Karaikkal rich in mansions
Were sent wise men by *Nitipati* -- a merchant
Famous throughout the *world and a native of Nakai* --
A maritime city of renown --, seeking the hand
Of the jewelled beauty of a matching clan
For his son and scion. (1723)

8. The men of great wisdom entered the house to which
They came to broach the subject of wedding,
Called on Dhanadatthar, and said; "Be pleased to wed your daughter,
The one of lustrous jewels to Paramadhatthan, the son
Of *Nitipati*, in keeping with the hoary tradition." (1724)

9. He agreed to the marriage having due regard
To all propriety and gave them leave to depart;
Of his consent they apprised *Nitipati who felt*
Happy as one blessed with an especial greatness;
He engaged himself with his wealthy kin in the preparation
For the grand wedding of his great and peerless son. (1725)

0. They duly despatched the invitations for the wedding;
As the wedding-day neared they made ready everything
For the performance of wedding-rites; they decked
The bridegroom -- the wearer of garlands wrought
Of flowers that grew in bunches --, for the marriage;
To the beat of wedding-*drums they* fared forth
And entered the city of Karaikkal. (1726)

11. They moved into the beauteous mansion of Dhanadatthar
Glowing with a garland buzzed over by bees; the rites
Of wedding, as ordained in the lucid *sastras*, were performed;
Thus they married her of flower-soft feet,
Sweet-smile and peafowl-mien to him who was
Verily a bull, to the approbation of the joyous kin. (1727)

12. The wedding rites were all over; as man and wife
They lived there for sometime; she was the only child
Of Dhanadatthar's family; he would not suffer her
To leave for Nakai, the littoral city of the roaring sea;
To dwell happily with her husband he had
A beautiful mansion built for her, nearby. (1728)

13. After the wedding he gave limitless wealth
To Paramadatthan who rejoiced exceedingly;
The son of *Nitipati* who was of peerless greatness
Took to business and ere-long grew lofty, and could
Secure all prosperity for his family-life
In keeping with the tradition of his clan. (1729)

14. She of perfumed locks who was his helpmeet rare,
Soared in swelling devotion ceaseless for the feet
Divine of the Rider of the martial Bull, and stood
Unswerving, poised in the virtue of domestic life. (1730)

15. When servitors of the Lord came, she fed them
With nectarean food, gave them in loving devotion
Ruddy gold, gems ninefold, garments exquisite
And the like, divining their circumstance and need;
Thus throve her soul in ever-growing devotion ardent
For the feet of the Lord. (1731)

16. Some men who called on Paramadatthan who was thriving
In his righteous business, gave him a pair of mangoes;
He received them and fulfilled their desire; he then
Bade (his servant) thus: "Take these to my house." (1732)

17. She of fragrant *koontal* decked with flowers, received
The pair of mangoes sent by her husband; she kept them
Where they should be kept; now came a serviteur of the Lord
Whose jewels are snakes, into the house prompted
By a great desire to get fed. (1733)

18. Beholding the state of the servitor of the Lord-Author
Of the Gospels, she thought: "I'll appease the hunger
Of the Lord's devotee." She offered him water to cleanse
His feet, and spread the tender plantain-leaf
For serving food; she knew him to be the guest that would
Cure one, of sins. (1734)

19. She who was like Lakshmi throned on lotus fragrant,
Had cooked rice, but not dishes of curry; she mused thus:
"The servitor of the Lord-Rider of the Bull is come as a guest
Who is not to be met with even by a longing quest;
Can there be a boon greater than this?"
Straight she proceeded with her duty to feed him. (1735)

20. Taking with her one of the goodly and fragrant mangoes
Sent to her keeping by her husband, she hastened
To serve the servitor; thus in delight great
The queller of misery had the devotee well fed. (1736)

21. The divine servitor who came there befuddled, bent with age,
And fatigued by fiery hunger that clamoured
For immediate appeasement, ate the timely meal,
Soft and toothsome, relishing it with the mango sweet;
He admired the service of the wondrous woman of soft
And perfumed locks, and went his way. (1737)

22. After he left, the merchant and lord of the house
Entered the spacious mansion when the sun was
In the meridian, and had his bath; he desired
To have his meal; his chaste wife attended to that duty. (1738)

23. She provided him with tasty food and curried dishes;
Then she of fragrant *koontal* secured and served
On his leaf the sweet-smelling mango, one of the two
That remained (uneaten) and sent to her
That day by her ever-glorious husband. (1739)

24. The garlanded merchant that felt insatiate having
Tasted the sweetness of the exceedingly delicious fruit
Served by his wife, said: "There is one more of this kind;
Get me that too." She moved out as if to secure it. (1740)

25. She moved away dismayed; what could she do?
How could she get at the unavailable fruit? Oblivious
Of herself, with all her mind she meditated the feet
Of the Lord who comes to the rescue when devoutly invoked.
Behold the marvel! A delicious fruit par excellence came
Into the palm of her of dangling plaited hair
By the grace of Grace. (1741)

26. She served it to him in joy; he ate it, found it to be
More delicious than nectar, and said: "This is not
The mango that I gave you; this rarity is not to be found
In all the three worlds; whence did you get this?"
Thus he queried the bangled beauty. (1742)

27. When thus confronted, she would not disclose it to him
Thinking thus: "This grace of Grace should not be divulged."
Neither would she, poised in chastity, deem concealment
From her husband the true way; she quaked in fear. (1743)

28. "My duty is to relate what I have done." Thus she resolved
Prompted by virtue; she adored the feet of the Lord
Enshrining Him in her mind; to the husband's question:
"Who was it that gave you the fruit?" she of perfumed locks
Decked with flowers, narrated how the fruit came to be. (1744)

29. The lord of the house who was told that it was by the grace
Of the Lord, was not convinced; addressing her who was
Like the goddess on lotus, he said: "If it be by the divine
Grace of the effulgent Lord of matted hair, call forth,
By His grace once again a flawless fruit and give it to me." (1745)

30. The great wife moved away, adored the Lord whose jewels
Are snakes and prayed thus: "If you deign not to grace me
With it now, my words will be deemed false."
Lo, by His grace a mango reached her and she placed it
Into his palm which he received, wonder-struck. (1746)

31. The merchant could no more behold the fruit that was
Passed to his hand, after he received it; he was seized
By an unappeasable fear and he stood confounded;
He deemed her of beauteous locks to be a supernatural woman;
He resolved to part from her but would not confide
His intent to any one; he passed his days without consortium. (1747)

32. Determined to part from her for good, he applied himself
To the set task; he declared his purpose thus: "I'll sail
The billowy sea in a bark and return with wealth immense."
His close kin and merchants -- glorious and flawless --,
Had a merchantman built for him. (1748)

33. He fitted the vessel with crew; he filled her with merchandise
Coveted by men living in the far shores; hailing the god
Of sea, on an auspicious day, the leader of mercantile clan
Embarked and sailed the cool billowy main. (1749)

34. He sailed the sea and disembarked in such ports as he had
Already planned and came by endless wealth and goods;
Thus he spent a few days, then boarded his barge
And arrived at near a town in the Pandya realm girt with water. (1750)

35. He moved into the town, traded his various goods, came by
Immense wealth eventually, and made safe investments.
To the great joy of the dwellers of the truly glorious town
He married the ineffably beautiful daughter
Of a merchant of that town. (1751)

36. Having duly wedded that rare Lakshmi-like woman
In all pomp and pageantry, with a mind concealing clean
The deception he had played on his former wife, the one
Of soft fragrant *koontal* which was dark as black sand, he lived
An otherwise virtuous life with a face beaming in joy. (1752)

37. He abode in that hoary town dight with fragrant groves
Companied with eminent merchants; he prospered in
Maritime commerce and his argosy skimmed the billowy main;
He grew famous and was like Kubera; unto him was born
A daughter, verily a lamp of growing lustre. (1753)

38. After the birth of the child he desired to perform
The christening ceremony and made arrangements therefor;
His beloved child he named after his peerless wife great
From whom he parted affrighted deeming her
An adorable deity, never entertaining any thought
Of consortium thereafter. (1754)

39. As he abode there, at Karaikkal dight with
Mansions girt with an impregnable fort, the daughter
Of Dhanadatthan, the peerless merchant opulent --,
Armoured in ever-during chastity and poised in
Dharmic piety, abode at her house. (1755)

40. The kinsmen of the radiant beauty bejewelled, verily
A twig of splendour, came by the report that Paramadattan
Who sailed the sea to amass wealth immense, abode
At a great city in the Pandya country of crowning glory;
They heard that he had settled there for good
Having made immeasurable wealth. (1756)

41. The moment they heard the news, the kinsfolk
Of the heavenly woman sent there a few of their close kin
And had the news confirmed; they were troubled in mind;
They said: "It is our duty to take her of swelling breasts
To him and leave her there." (1757)

42. They carried the bashful beauty whose gait was
Peafowl-like, in a magnificent litter beauteous
Seating her therein like Lakshmi non-pareil on her seat
Of lotus; they screened the litter; loving kinsmen
And friendly women sweet of speech, encircling her
Hied on their way for many a day. (1758)

43. Days passed and they reached the Pandya country;
They came to the limits of the town where Paramadatthan
Of burgeoning fame abode; they sent word to him,
The husband of unforfeitable glory, that they had
Thither arrived with his adorable wife, the scion
That sanctified her clan. (1759)

44. When the merchant heard of their arrival, he was
Fear-struck ; with his bangled wife whom he took to
As his second spouse and his daughter, he hied
Towards the lady of fragrant locks, saying:
"I would go to her even ere she would come to me." (1760)

45. With his wife and tender child of toddling gait
He bowed at the feet of the great wife who stood there
Like a young roe, and said: "I thrive by your grace;
The tender child, by your grace, bears your name."
This said, he prostrated flat before her in worship. (1761)

46. Beholding the adoring husband, she who was truly
A beauteous liana, and the gathered kin moved away
And stood stricken by fear; touched to the quick
And bitten by shame, the relations said: "O Wearer
Of a fragrant garland! What makes you worship
Your beauteous wife?" (1762)

47. He addressed the perplexed kinnery thus: "She is not
A mere human; she is indeed a deity great; aware of this
I left her and have named this, my daughter after her;
May ye too adore her golden feet and hail her." (1763)

48. When thus he spake, the confounded kinsfolk exclaimed:
"What may this be?" Hearkening to the merchant's words,
She of fragrant locks, hailed the feet of the Lord
Of matted hair, decked with resounding anklets;
Then, she spake from her inmost consciousness
Welling up from her inner vision into which merged
Her mind and all. (1764)

49. "So, this is his persuasion; oh Lord, rid me of this
Burden of flesh poised in beauty and hitherto borne
For his sake; fittingly bestow on me Your slave,
The form of a ghost to hail You in Your world." Thus she prayed
And thus she hailed the feet of the Supreme One. (1765)

50. As she thus prayed, by the grace of the Lord-Dancer
Upborne by a supernal consciousness, she who was to get
What she prayed for, shook away all her flesh where
Abode beauty, and stood a skeletal being --,
The form of the hallowed ghost --, hailed by
Heaven, earth and all. (1766)

51. It showered flowers everywhere; the music
Of celestial *tuntupis* filled all the worlds and reverberated;
Munis were delighted; Siva's hosts danced *Kunalai*.
The flawless kinsfolk that stood before her adored her;
Struck with awe, they moved away. (1767)

52. By the integer of wisdom which welled up from within
She hailed the Lord of Uma with *Arputa-th-Tiruvantati*
Then and there; in love she sang thus: "Behold! I've
Become now part of the goodly hosts of Siva that hail
The beauteous and roseate feet of the Lord." (1768)

53. She sang the glorious *Erattai Mani Malai*
In choice anaphoretic verse; prompted by
Spiralling transconsciousness she was on her
Holy way to the argent Mount Kailas great, where abides
The Lord who, of yore, burnt the triple cities. (1769)

54. Those that eyed her, fled away struck by her
Awesome form; when she heard them utter words
Scared by her form, she thought thus: "If the Lord
Of celestials be pleased to know who I am, of what avail
Are these remarks by the men of earth, strangers to truth?" (1770)

55. With a speed exceeding that of the mind
She travelled fast the realms in the north;
She came near the Mount Kailas of pervasive radiance
Where abides the Wielder of the Trident, decked with
A garland of *Konrai* blooms burgeoning in serried order;
She durst not tread with her feet the holy ascent
But measured it with her head. (1771)

56. When with her head she ascended the argent mountain
Of Sankara, devotion in her swelled up more and more;
The daughter of Himavant of bow-like brow,
Who is concorporate with Her brow-eyed Lord who sports
As a chaplet the ever-young crescent on His head,
Cast Her look of grace on her. (1772)

57. The divine heart of the Goddess wondering,
She addressed Her Lord, in love thus: "O Lord!
Behold the love of the skeletal being that measures
The ascent with its head!" Unto our Goddess
The Lord spake graciously thus: (1773)

58. "She that cometh, O Uma, is truly a Mater that fosters Us!
She prayed for that glorious form and was blessed with it."
Then as she neared Him, He addressed Her with that
One unique word "Mater" that all the worlds
Might stand redeemed. (1774)

59. When He graciously addressed her as 'Mother'
She hailed Him as 'Father', fell at His roseate feet
Of lotus and rose up; the Lord who is decked
With the ear-ring of white chank, graciously eyed her
And asked her: "What may your prayer be?"
The adoring servitor bowed and then spake. (1775)

60. She prayed for deathless devotion blissful and she
Prayed again: "I seek birthlessness; should I be
Born again, then let me never, never forget You;
Also let me pray for the boon to hymn in delight,
O Holy One, near beneath Your feet when You dance." (1776)

61. Even thus He graced her and said: "In Alankadu
Girt with fields and blazing in the south
With sempiternal splendour you are blessed to witness
The Great Dance; linked with joy, for ever may you
Hymn us in songs and psalms." Thus spake He,
The prop of them that hail Him. (1777)

62. Thus blessed, the Mother took leave of the Lord
Who is the import true of the Vedas, adored Him
And moved away; borne by an ineffable love great
She measured the way to Tiruvalankadu,
Glorious and goodly, with her head. (1778)

63. In Alankadu she beheld the Dance of the Lord
Whose uplifted foot divine straight swept
The heavens; witnessing this marvel, she sang
The goodly hoary decad which oped thus:
"Breasts dried fleshless!" Thus she hailed Him
Whose source is unknown; there she throve
Hailing the dance lovingly hailed by the world. (1779)

64. Her loving devotion great swelled the more, when she
Eyed before her the divine dance of the Lord who is
Decked with *Konrai* blooms whose petals breathe fragrance;
Struck by marvel she sang the hymn which oped thus:
Etti, Elavam, Eekai.... and concluded thus:
"Dances the beauteous One to the beat of drum." (1780)

65. Who can ever essay to measure the glory of her
Who was endearingly addressed as 'Mother'
By the Lord who received and (still) retains on His crest
The flood? She is the one who for ever abides
Beneath the uplifted foot, roseate and redemptive,
Of the Lord of the Cosmic Dance. (1781)

66. Having hailed the radiant and flower-soft feet
Of the Mother who sings before the Lord who doth
Dance in grace and who is beginningless and endless,
I proceed to narrate the divine service of Appoothi,
The divinely enlightened *muni* great of Tingaloor
The town girt with fields of cool water. (1782)

Stanza	Line		
6		*St. Sekkizhar says that Punitavatiyar* was perfect in every limb hailed as auspicious in works on Auspicious Anatomy (Samudrika Lakshana) by knowledgeable authors.	
6	3-5	When a girl becomes nubile, she stays indoors.	
11		Bull	: In Tamil literature a lad is described as a bull and a lass a peacock.
20		St.Sekkizhar coins a word (Illalan) thereby supplying a long-felt want in the Tamil tongue. The lady of the house is called Illall. The word Illan however does not refer to one who is the lord of the house. It refers to one who owns nothing, a mere pauper. Both in Sanskrit and Tamil, the word 'home' stands for the wife. "Home is but a synonym for wife" *goes the Sanskrit* adage which says "Grihini grhiham uchyate." (Bharati.) The world of Tamil letters is ever indebted to St. Sekkizhar for his having coined three rich words (*Illalan, Manaippati, Il Iraivan) whereby the masculine* gender for the word Illal can be indicated.	
26		*The husband was a merchant* in the true sense of the word. He could assess the value of any material.	
31		*cf.* The Lord's admonition to Joseph, St.Matthew. 1-24-25.	
43		cf. Janakanam kule kirtim - Valmiki.	
49		The form of a ghost, Animated skeletal self wrought of Suddha-Maya. Its form is of bones. It is endowed with awe-inspiring effulgence. It can travel anywhere at will, at a speed defying human calculation. It is endowed with organs, outer as well as inner, all divine. For further *details* see *stanza 50.*	
64		Etti	: Strychnos nuxvomica
		Elavam	: Bombax pretandrum or Eriodendron anfractuosum.
		Eekai	: Zizyphus Napeca (Soorai)

30. The Puranam Of Appoothi Adikal Nayanar

"I am a servitor of the servitors of
Appoothi the unique."

- The *Tiru-th-Tonda-th-Tokai.*

1. He was a devotee of the Lord-Dancer; fitting glory was his;
Lofty was he, by reason of his boundless *tapas;*
He took refuge in the feet of Vakeesar glorious;
Even ere Arasu had known of him, impelled by a love
To behold him, he melted in loving devotion for him. (1783)

2. He had quelled larceny, falsity, lust, wrath
And such other flaws; he was a prosperous householder;
Weights and measures and scales too, children,
Kine and buffaloes and all possessions in his house
He named after Vakeesar and such was his way of life. (1784)

3. Though he had not beheld Vakeesar's person,
Hearkening to his ever-during servitorship glorious
And the grace of the Lord bestowed on him, he set up
Holy *matams*, water-booths and other ever-during
Charitable endowments in his name and throve thus
Poised in piety. (1785)

4. Tirunavukkarasar adored Lord Siva-verily a tusker-,
Enshrined at Tiruppazhanam with His consort, the daughter
Of Himavant-a lovely she-elephant-, and there
Rendered service; impelled by a unitive devotion to hail
The Lord in His various other shrines he moved on, and was
On the way that lay near unto Tingaloor. (1786)

5. He reached an umbrageous water-booth of foison --
Cool like a well filled pool that could do away with
All aestival distress, very like the merciful heart serene
Of the gracious One --, situate on the marge of the road
Frequented by innumerable people. (1787)

6. Vakeesar graciously eyed the booth of coolth where wafted
Gently the southerly, and also the ambrosial water;
His *chinta* was filled with marvel; he beheld everywhere
The name 'Tirunavukkarasu' beautifully inscribed. (1788)

7. To him that queried: "Who is it that hath this *pandal*
Here set up, giving it this name?" they that knew of it
Answered thus: "In the name of Tirunavukkarasar,
The servitor ruled by the Lord, saintly Appoothi
Of ineffable glory has wrought this; similar flawless
Endowments, pools and parks are also everywhere." (1789)

8. Vakeesar who heard them, thought: "What may this mean?"
He then addressed them standing there, thus: "Where is he?"
Him they replied thus: "He of the sacred thread, hails from
This hoary town; he has just left for his house;
That isn't far away; it is only nearby." (1790)

9. The *muni* left the place and reached the door-steps
Of the house of saintly Appoothi; the chief of the Brahmins
Of Tingaloor who was in the house, hearing of the arrival
Of one dear to the Lord, to the hallowed threshold came out. (1791)

10. Swift he came and adored the feet of Vakeesar who was always
The first to hail before anyone would salute him;
The great Brahmin addressed him thus:" Have I
Indeed wrought askesis endless? To what else do I owe
Your advent, oh incarnation of overflowing mercy?" (1792)

11. "We came here after worshipping the Lord whose bow
Is the peerless mountain, at Tiruppazhanam; on the way
We beheld your cool and umbrageous water-booth of foison;
We also heard of your charitable endowments;
So are we here." Thus he spake. (1793)

12. The flawless sovereign of speech then added:
"Unto the servitors of the Lord whose matted hair
Sports the river you have set up a great and ever-during
Water-booth; without inscribing your name thereon
Wherefore have you inscribed a different name?" (1794)

13. When the Brahmin that stood there heard this, he was
Jostled out of his sense; in wrath he burst out thus:
"You haven't spoken becomingly; is the hallowed name
Of him who by the sole puissance of his servitorship divine
Vanquished the intriguery of the king who colluded with
The shameless Samanas base, an alien name? (1795)

14. "By service divine rendered unto the sacred feet of our Lord,
Deliverance can be attained even in this life; this is made
Clear to men even like me by Tirunavukkarasar; I have
Inscribed his holy name; woe is me! I have heard you
Utter blasphemous words!" Thus he. (1796)

15. He added: "Who is there in this world of the merciful Lord
With soul so dead that does not know the glory of him
Who reached ashore in a stone for his float
On the swelling main? With all your auspicious and holy
Habit, you have spoken thus, even thus; whence are you?
Who indeed are you? Answer me." (1797)

16. When thus spake the one versed in the sacred Vedas,
Vakeesar answered him, well-aware of his greatness:
"I am the little one uninformed by clarity
That was redeemed by the Lord from the alien fold
Through His gracious affliction of a dire ache of stomach." (1798)

17. When thus Vakeesar announced himself explicitly
Saintly Appoothi folded his flower-hands over his head;
Tears cascaded from his eyes; his speech became
Incoherent; the hair on his thrilled body stood erect;
Down he fell on the ground and wore on his crown
His lotus-feet, the long awaited sanctuary. (1799)

18. Him Vakeesar adored with equal fervour and him
He lifted up; the Brahmin rare swam in delight
Like an indigent one blessed with rare wealth;
He danced before him for joy; in love and longing
He ran round him and sang. (1800)

19. By reason of the great joy that swelled in him
He knew not what it was he should do first;
He hastened into the house and announced the joyous news
Of the arrival of the kingly servitor ruled by God,
And emerged out with his great kith and kin,
Borne by great fervour. (1801)

20. He adored him; so too his wife, children
And other kin; in unabated love he received
The saintly leader into his house, washed his feet
With water soaked with flowers; he sprinkled
The holy water on himself and others
And they drank it also. (1802)

21. He had him duly seated and in love performed
Unto him the *pooja* and all the attendant rites;
He held before him the fragrant vessel of the holy ash
And his mind revelled in joy.
Then, impelled by a longing to feast him --
The redeemer of the world --, he beseeched him
And he too signified his assent. (1803)

22. When the holy *tapaswi* gave his assent,
Addressing his righteous wife he said:
"Behold the beatitude with which we are blessed!"
Knowing this to be a gift of the Lord
Whose throat sports the venom,
He felt happy and made
The preparations for the holy feast. (1804)

23. He had pure and unsullied dishes prepared
Rich in sextuple flavour;
To secure a leaf whereon to serve the meal
For the holy one,
He bade his eldest son '*Moottha* Tirunavukkarasu' thus:
"Secure a goodly plantain-leaf, tender and golden!"
He made him get it in all celerity. (1805)

24. "Behold my boon! I have been plied in this
Holy task by my goodly and righteous parents!"
Thus he thought and ran to the garden.
As he cut a broad and tender plantain-leaf
A dazzling snake bit him on his palm
Causing him to fall down in pain and giddiness. (1806)

25. He shook himself free of the snake of venomous sacs
Which having stung him, coiled round his hand
And stared with eyes whence issued sparks of fire.
Sorely agitated he thought: "Before I fall down
For ever by reason of the spreading poison,
I will run in all speed and hand over this tender leaf."
Thus resolved he came running. (1807)

26. He ran faster than the speed with which the poison
Invaded his body and as he thus sped
In pain and haste, to reach the house, he thought:
"I will not disclose to others the adder-bite, as it will
Delay the feasting of the rare *tapaswi*."
Thus resolved, he entered the house of foison. (1808)

27. The destructive venom spiralle_ p and up in him
And finishing its seventh circuit reached his head;
His teeth, eyes and body stood singed;
His speech became incoherent and life was
About to quit his body; somehow he still bore it;
The son that had grown giddy, placed before his mother
The tender leaf and fell down on earth. (1809)

28. The parents beheld the son that dropped down;
Sorely agitated they discerned his plight;
They observed his bleeding, his exhausted body
And other symptoms and concluded: "He is killed by poison."
Yet they languished not but pursued the means
For feeding the servitor. (1810)

29. They covered their rare son by rolling him into a mat
And kept him hid in the courtyard of the house.
"We will feed him screening this from his knowledge."
Thus resolved, they desired to hasten to the presence
Of the servitor of great prowess. (1811)

30. They hastened to their duty (well aware of the delay
Caused in feasting him;)
They arranged the dishes in due order;
Then they came to the presence of the peerless servitor,
Fell prostrate before him, rose up and said:
"Be pleased to partake of the meal
And redeem our whole clan."
When they addressed him thus (1812)

31. The rare *tapaswi* rose up, washed his feet
And sat on a different seat; before the leaf
And the place whereon it was to be laid were duly cleansed
He applied to himself the holy ash and as he
Began to distribute the ash to the parents and children (1813)

32. Addressing truthful Appoothi versed in the hoary fourfold Vedas
He said: "I must apply the holy ash to him who is
Elder than these children; get him here in all love."
Appoothi who would not disclose the happenings, then said:
"He is not to be of any service now, here!" (1814)

33. When he heard this, by the grace of the Lord
The divine and noble mind of the loving servitor
Felt agitated; addressing Appoothi he said:
"My heart is unable to bear these words;
What is it he has done? Unto this there is "One";
Tell me the whole truth."
Thus bidden Appoothi shook in fear. (1815)

34. Though he did not so far divulge the happenings
Afraid of losing the boon of feasting the great one,
Questioned thus by the great *tapaswi*
And impelled by a glorious sense of duty
To disclose everything when thus bidden,
With a broken heart, bowing before him
He narrated all that happened to his son. (1816)

35. When Navukkarasar heard this, he exclaimed:
"Great indeed is that you have wrought!
Whoever had done like unto you?"
Then he rose up and walked to the moribund.
He hymned a musical decad which in its wake
Caused the flow of the grace of Lord;
Thus he chased the venom away. (1817)

36. The son of the holy Brahmin who was freed of venom
Rose up like one who gets up quick from his slumber.
On him that fell adoringly at the flower-feet
Of Tirunavukkarasu --,
The servitor of the Lord whose flag sports the Bull --,
He applied the holy ash. (1818)

37. They that beheld the resurrected boy
Hailed the glory of the way of divine service.
His parents that stood there were distressed
As he had slightly hindered the feeding
Of the loving servitor whose glory is beyond reckoning. (1819)

38. Divining their distress the lord of language
Went with them all into their house
And sat on his seat ready to have his meal.
The wearer of the sacred thread was filled with joy
And busied himself in the acts of service. (1820)

39. The floor was cleansed bright
With glorious cow-dung mixed in water;
White *Kolam* was drawn thereon;
Beauteous lamps were lit;
The historic plantain-leaf was unfolded (unfurled)
And was washed in love with water;
The sliced end of the leaf faced the right side
In keeping with the tradition. (1821)

40. The great *tapaswi* who was washing his hand
With the fragrant water offered to him, cast his look
On the Brahmin and his children, and said:
"May you and your children rare also eat with me."
Thus told, they obeyed him in love. (1822)

41. Appoothi and his sons were seated beside him;
The food was joyously served by the lady of the house;
With the devotee of the Lord who wears *konrai* blooms
On his matted hair, the servitor --
Verily the lion of beauteous Tamil --,
Partook of the food graciously. (1823)

42. In the rich and divine house of the great *tapaswi*-Brahmin,
He took his food and conferred on him loving friendship;
Thus in endearing love did he spend many a day.
Then the glorious lord of language came
To the ancient town of Tiruppazhanam
And at the hallowed feet of the Lord enshrined there,
Hymned goodly decads of Tamil. (1824)

43. He sang the glory of Appoothi's servitorship
In the decad beginning with the words: "Ṣon *Maalai*"
Which attested his love for the Lord
Who wears the holy ash on His person.
Thus blessed, the goodly one always hailed
Tirunavukkarasar and flourished
With the conviction that the feet
Of Tirunavukkarasar are Truth incarnate. (1825)

44. Thus for ever he hailed the name
Of Tirunavukkarasar; he was convinced
That his golden feet alone were to be attained
To gain deliverance; he was resolved to attain them.
That indeed was the righteous path
He pursued steadfast and in the end
Gained the feet of the Lord-Dancer of Tillai
Whose frame is shared by Her
Whose eyes are like that of an antelope's. (1826)

45. Hailing the feet of the lofty Brahmin Appoothi
Who through Tirunavukkarasar gained the golden feet
Of the Lord whose hand sports the young one of a deer,
Let me proceed to historicise the servitorship
Of Tiruneelanakkar versed in the four Vedas
And who hailed from Satthamangkai girt with
Fields and ponds where burgeon a forest
Of lotus flowers. (1827)

Stanza	Line	
17	6	is but an elaboration of the one significant term in the original viz., saraṇa kamalam.
20		cf. The ritual in Virasaivam.
32		The word ingku in the context means 'to me'.
39		The sliced end of the leaf is broader and it must face the right hand of the eater.

31. The Puranam of Tiruneelanakkar

"I am a servitor of Neelanakkar of Satthamangkai
girt with resounding waters."

- The *Tiru-th-Tonda-th-Tokai.*

1. In the ponds of Satthamangkai carps leap over blown lotuses;
The town is girt with fields rich in ripe paddy crops;
It is in the land fed by the Cauvery and is world-famous;
It is the queen of towns where reside auspicious Brahmins. (1828)

2. In that goodly town of foison, women of fragrant foreheads
Bathe in the tanks of soft-petalled flowers;
With the damsels dance the swans in the fords;
A good many starlings chant the Sama Veda
With the throngs of boys who chant the Vedas
And even instruct them. (1829)

3. They concluded after due spiritual investigation
That the true import of Truth is the holy ash;
They fostered it and thrived under its protection;
These were the twice-born who tended the triple fire
In that town;
To the triple fire like unto *dharma* that helped one
Cross the sea of transmigration
Their women added a fourth -- their chastity,
And tended the fourfold fire. (1830)

4. In that ancient town where Brahmins thrived
Unswerving from the great and righteous way of life,
Flourished Neelanakkar whose *life* was
A living commentary of the four Vedas
Which indeed excel the greatness of earth itself.
He was a loving servitor of the Lord
Whose throat holds the poison. (1831)

5. He was blessed with the certain knowledge
That the true import of the Vedas
Was the adoration of the Lord in whose matted hair
Courses the flood, and the performance in love,
Of *pada-pooja* and worship to His servitors.
He was poised in this thought which bade him
Perform these two acts only, in devotion. (1832)

6. Duly would he daily perform the *pooja* unto the Lord-Author
Of the Vedas, as prescribed by the truthful Agamas;
Then would he undertake to do all service
For the servitors of the Lord, right from feeding them. (1833)

7. As he thus lived, on an Adirai-Day
When he had duly completed his *pooja* to the Lord
The holy servitor desired to perform *archana*
For the Lord enshrined in hoary Ayavanti. (1834)

8. Taking with him, from his house, in integrating love
And without lack, all that is needed for the *pooja*
The servitor of limitless *tapas* fared forth
With his wife and reached the Lord's temple. (1835)

9. He entered the temple, adored the twin feet
Of the nectarean Lord of Ayavanti and commenced the *pooja*;
His wife helped him with needed service;
The spiritually great one thus performed the *pooja*. (1836)

10. The *pooja* came to an end, but not his love;
He went round the *prakara* encircling the Lord,
Fell prostrate, rose up, and standing
In His presence hailed Him, casting looks profound
On the Ens still searched by the Vedas;
Then he chanted before Him the mystic pentad
As ordained, conscientiously. (1837)

11. When the servitor of boundless askesis
Chanted as ordained the *Panchakshara*
The gloried truth of which is explicated
By the Vedas and all other scriptures,
A spider slipped from its web and fell down
On the divine frame of the Lord
Who bent the huge and auric *Meru* into a bow. (1838)

12. When thus the spider fell down,
The wife that stood nearby,
Like a fear-borne mother
Who with her lips would blow away
A spider that had fallen on her tender child,
In overflowing love blew away that spider. (1839)

13. The wife did so as her heart was sorely agitated.
When the Brahmin whose *tapas* would quell bondage,
Witnessed this, he closed his eyes and said:
"What is it, oh senseless one, you have done?"
(Thus questioned) she said: "As the white spider
Fell on Him, I blew it away." (1840)

14. He would not consider the love
That impelled his wife to act thus;
The wearer of the sacred thread but thought
That such an act had polluted his pooja;
He resolved to forsake her. (1841)

15. "Instead of getting rid of the spider that fell
On the divine person of the Pure One whose matted hair
Dazzles like the lightning, by some other means,
You blew over Him polluting Him with *saliva;*
I hereby forsake you." Thus he spake. (1842)

16. It was evening and the sun sank
Behind the western mountain;
The wife stepped aside as commanded;
He performed the expiatory rites
And completed the *pooja.*
Then the servitor of the Lord of the matted hair
Fared forth and entered his protected house. (1843)

17. Her heart was with fear fraught;
She dared not go near her husband;
She abode within the Temple of the Lord who ate the poison;
Tiruneelanakkar versed in the well-worded Vedas
Slept that night on the soft cotton mattress. (1844)

18. As he thus slumbered, the Lord of Ayavanti
With His crest where the Ganga rests, appearing
In his dream, revealed to him His divine frame,
And said in grace: "Barring this side over which
She blew in love, behold here the other side
Full of boils and blisters by the spider caused." (1845)

19. He thought it not to be a dream but as that
Which took place in the wakeful state;
With hands folded above his head he woke up
Having had the mystical tremendum.
The servitor danced in adoration,
Sang hymns and worshipped Him.
He hailed the mercy of the Lord
Of the universe and wept. (1846)

20. As the night melted and day broke
He went into the temple, fell prostrate
At the feet of the Primal Lord, the God of Ayavanti,
Rose up and hailed Him.
Then with the venerable woman he repaired to his house. (1847)

21. His present joy far exceeded his former joy;
In abiding delight, he rendered limitless *pooja* for the Lord;
In love he willingly fulfilled as before the wish
Of all the loving servitors that came to him. (1848)

22. When thus he joyously thrived, poised in love,
He heard of the manifold glory of the Brahmin-child
Of Poontharai, the eternal city.
A great desire to bow at his feet grew apace in him. (1849)

23. When he flourished in such great excellence,
To grace the world with the fruit of its *tapas*
The prince or Sanbai who was visiting the holy shrines
Of the Lord whose matted hair sports the celestial Ganga,
Arrived at Satthamangkai. (1850)

24. With Tiruneelakanda Yazhppanar
Of ever-growing renown, his wife
Whose *koonthal* was decked with blooms
And the great congregation of servitors
The lord of Pukali was camping close by.
Neelanakkar heard this news in delight great. (1851)

25. Even as he heard this, he was happily thrilled;
He had the town decorated with flower-garlands,
Flags and festoons; he also set up
An extensive *pandal* to walk beneath its umbrage;
Then he rose up with his goodly kin to receive him. (1852)

26. He joined the holy company of the divine child
And bade them all a warm welcome.
In manifold ways he danced and sang
And made adorations as his joy knew no bounds.
Then with the divine child and the holy company
He came to his huge and auric mansion. (1853)

27. In unison with the glory of the advent of the divine child
Groups of holy men thronged to his house;
In everglowing love and devotion, he feasted
The patron of lofty-Seerkazhi in his house. (1854)

28. After the feasting (as time passed on)
The sun began to sink into the western main;
Night came and the rays of the moon fell
On the ponds where teemed *kumuda-flowers;*
Neelanakkar made all arrangements in his house
For the stay of the godly child that had in the past
Drunk the breast-milk of Her, the daughter of Himavant. (1855)

29. After supping with the servitors, the divine child
That in the past cried, to cause the manifestation
Of the Lord and His Consort, for the world's redemption,
Called Tiruneelanakkar and he forthwith rushed to him,
Fell at his feet, rose up and stood before him. (1856)

30. Addressing the standing devotee he said:
"Be pleased to provide accommodation this day
For Neelakandar the great *Panar.*"
He heard this in joy and set apart the space
Near *vetikai,* in the very centre of his house. (1857)

31. In the *'vetikai'* where fire was for ever burning,
The red flame began to spiral up and twirl right,
Glowing more resplendent than ever in various ways.
Witnessing this, the wearer of the sacred thread
Felt immensely happy.
The Lord *of Sakota-Yazh* with his wife beside him
Slumbered in peace by the grace of the Lord. (1858)

32. The Lord of Kauniyas after his stay there at night
Fared forth to hymn the praise of the Lord of Ayavanti
Upon whose crest rests the crescent;
He praised Neelanakkar in his divine decad
Surcharged with nectarean words of dulcet Tamil. (1859)

33. Decking the Lord with his fresh garlands of divine decads
He made his adoration;
He endowed Neelanakkar with his great friendship;
The divine child that sang the hoary Vedas
In ever-fresh Tamil, then fared forth to other shrines. (1860)

34. When the Child ruled by God departed,
Though the servitor was impelled by love and friendship
To follow him, he would not transgress
The mandate of the divine patron.
He returned, plying his heart after him,
And somehow managed to abide in his place. (1861)

35. The Brahmin lived performing flawless *pooja*
As before and as by the Vedas ordained, in great splendour;
He cultivated an ardent love for the feet
Of the Brahmin-child, the master of the sacred Vedas
And the son of Him whose mount is the Bull. (1862)

36. To spend many days in growing friendship
He went to every shrine visited
By the lion of Sanbai; Tiruneelanakkar,
The mighty servitor, would sojourn
With the munificent and glorious child
And then repair to his town. (1863)

37. Thus flourished the Brahmin of great *tapas*
In ever-increasing love, for many days;
As he was present at the holy wedding
Of the peerless one of ever-prosperous Sirkazhi
And as he hailed it, he reached Siva's feet. (1864)

38. Hailing the feet of Neelanakkar, the first
Among the Brahmins of Satthamangkai --
Celebrated for their performance of Vedic duties --,
We will now narrate the servitorship
Of Naminandi -- a twice-born --,
Who gained conscious at-one-ment
With Him whose flag sports the Bull. (1865)

Stanza	Line	
16		Protected house : The house protected by God.
30		Vetikai : The platform whereon is tended the sacrificial fire.
34	4	The divine patron is Tirugnanasambandhar.

32. The Puranam of Naminandi Adikal

"I am a servitor of the servitors of Naminandi,
the rarest of men."

- The *Tiru-th-Tonda-th-Tokai.*

1. In the Cauvery land of the *Cholas* who wield
The unique sceptre to guard the world,
Is Yema-p-peroor, rich in vast fields
Full of red-lotuses, and spacious tanks.
The glory of the righteous men that thither thrive
Ever adhering to the rare and true Vedas
Which do away with falsity,
Fills all the eight directions. (1866)

2. Beside the beauteous streets are festoons
Decked with dangling garlands;
Over the mansions float the clouds that have
Drunk deep from the ocean-stream;
The gardens are cool and dark with bowers;
The areca trees are buzzed over by bees;
It is the Vedas that resound there in the morn;
Its watery fields are thick with lotus-flowers. (1867)

3. The lotuses of soft and red petals that rose above
The white paddy crops in the fields, were like
The red flames fostered by the wearers of white
Sacred threads, on the white sands strewn on *vetikais*. (1868)

4. In that town of renown, from the lofty clan
Of Brahmins who, in integrated devotion,
Fostered the Saivite way which was established
In the Holy Ash, hailed Naminandi Adikal.
For his life here and hereafter he was blessed
With the *tapas* of ever blessing and adoring
The feet of the Lord. (1869)

5. He could be verily called the pure, red flame
Fostered by the Vedic splendour of true piety;
He knew that the supreme truth of life
Was to be established in the holy ash;
He adored the roseate feet of the Lord --
The Singer of the Sama Veda --,
Night and day, and was steeped in joy. (1870)

6. Convinced that the adoration of the fragrant
And flower-like feet of the Lord, that do away with
All the evil troubles of the devotees,
Is truly all the gain one could come by,
He would leave his town and reach Tiruvaroor;
He hailed there for many days the hallowed feet of the Lord
The Wielder of the mountain-bow
Who destroyed the triple cities of the foes. (1871)

7. Deeming the performance of adoration
In the presence of the Lord who is verily
A ruby-flame enshrined in the auric Ant-hill
To be the righteous way of life, he came there,
Fell prostrate before Him and adored Him.
Gaining thus the life he sought, he came out
To the *prakaram* and entered the temple
Of Ara-Neri situate close
To the beauteous forted wall, to adore the deity there. (1872)

8. He hailed Him duly; love in him welled up;
He adored Him again and again; then by the grace
Of Grace he could divine what he should do then;
He engaged himself in manifold acts of service;
A desire to light many a lamp possessed him;
He rose up to do this. (1873)

9. When he thus rose up, the day had spent itself
And the hour of dusk had come;
He thought that the propitious hour would pass away
Should he go to his house of foison (to fulfil his desire).
He entered a nearby house to secure ghee,
And that house happened to be that of the Samanas
Who were ever remote from truth;
They spoke to him thus: (1874)

10. "Lamps are a needless excess for the Lord
Who sports the fire in the palm of his hand;
We will not spare you any ghee; if you are
Bent upon lighting lamps, do it with water."
Thus they spoke to the servitor,
They that hold one and the same thing
To be both true and false,
The pursuers of the flawed way. (1875)

11. He could not bear the words spoken
So slightly by the Samanas;
He quit that place at once sorely grieved;
He came to the temple of the Lord who wears on His crest
The crescent and the fragrant flowers of *konrai*
And, in melting love, fell prostrate on the ground.
Then spake an unbodied voice from the heavens. (1876)

12. "Be freed from sorrow; to engage yourself
In the ceaseless service of lighting lamps
You may use the water from the nearby tank."
When he heard the divine voice caused by the grace
Of the Lord, the Wearer of the crepuscular crescent,
His mind revelled in joy and he stood (happily) perplexed. (1877)

13. Thinking on the grace of the Lord in whose crest
The Ganga flows, he rose up,
Entered the tank of goodly water
Came to its very centre, chanted the Lord's name,
Took water by dipping, reached the temple,
Poured over the twisted wicks and into the lamp-bowls
The water, to the wonderment
Of the men of this sea-girt earth. (1878)

14. When he lit a lamp, it blazed up in splendour;
Beholding this, he lit all the lamps in the temple
Of the Primal God, the Lord of Ara-Neri.
In the presence of the Samanas who for ever
Brooded evil and spoke blasphemously,
In great joy he lit the lamps by the Lord's grace.
He caused them to burn with water
And the whole country witnessed this. (1879)

15. To keep all the beauteous lamps burning till dawn
He would duly pour water into the bowls of lamps
That began to dry up.
Then to adore the Lord -- the true import of the Vedas --,
In his house, as was his wont, from which
He would never once swerve,
He took leave of the Lord of Ara-Neri
And left for his town that very night. (1880)

16. He returned home that night and duly
Performed the *pooja* for the Pure One as usual;
Then he ate his meal and went to bed;
He woke up at day-break and duly performed
The *pooja* for the Lord whose jewels are snakes,
And then left for Tiruvaroor. (1881)

17. Arriving thither he adored Him;
He went round the temple of Ara-Neri
Where the Lord abides in joy;
Delighted he prostrated before the Lord,
Rose up and duly performed all service
Within and without the temple during the day;
When it was evening, he lit the lamps everywhere
And adored the feet of the Lord. (1882)

18. When as usual he plied himself in the acts of service
For many days, the base Samanas that were
Confounded by Dandi Adikal perished;
In Tiruvaroor where the *Devas* hailed the feet
Of the servitors of their Lord Siva,
Glory came to abide, praised by the seven worlds. (1883)

19. As a result of the servitorship of Naminandi
Who was poised in the Vedas -- the very form of Nada --,
For providing all that is needed right from
The daily nectarean offerings and *pooja*,
To the Lord of all lives, the hallowed One
Enshrined at the Ant-hill,
Many endowments were made that the way
Of the Vedas and the *Agamas* might thrive,
By the *Chola*-King who reigned
From the throne of justice. (1884)

20. The Lord Veethivitangka who wears the crescent
In His matted hair and rides the victorious Bull
For ever rules Tiruvaroor and performs His acts
Playful and divine at once;
Pangkuni Uttara festival too marks His glory;
Naminandi prayed to the Lord that he be
Blessed to witness these; (his prayer was heard). (1885)

21. As he performed manifold acts of service,
The Lord of Tiruvaroor whose glory fills
The seven worlds, and who for ever
Is poised in the love of His devotees,
Graced the festivities as prayed by Naminandi;
The servitor adored Him;
Weal and welfare increased;
We too stand redeemed. (1886)

22. During the festival, the Lord of the *Devas*
Graced Manali by His visit;
All devotees, without distinction of class or clan
Thronged there and Naminandi who joined them
Adored the Lord thither;
As he had the *darshan* of the Lord,
The Protector of the Devas, in all His splendour
Of regal festivity, he felt delighted. (1887)

23. He adored the Lord the live-long day;
When the Lord came back to His temple,
He hailed Him there and taking leave of Him
Repaired to his town through the inky-dark night.
He would not enter his house, pure and holy,
And slumbered on the pial.
His wife who is his helpmate in all his *dharma* and *karma*,
Thither came and requested him to come in. (1888)

24. She said: "Be pleased to perform the *pooja*
For the Lord who wears the crescent on His crown
And also the Agni-rites; thereafter you may
Be pleased to eat and slumber."
He replied her thus: "This day our Lord
Visited Manali; I adored Him with all and sundry;
I am afraid I am polluted." (1889)

25. "So I should first have the purificatory bath;
I will then enter the house to commence the *pooja;*
Secure for me, here, cool water and things needed."
Thus bidden, the loving wife hastened
Into the house to secure them. (1890)

26. Then, we know not, if it was by the Lord's grace
Or by the fatigue he suffered, he fell asleep
All at once; he slept, his mind fixed
On the feet of the Lord of the *Devas;*
He then dreamt a dream. (1891)

27. As if to accept the *pooja* of the great servitor
Lord Veethivitangka of ever-glorious Tiruvaroor
Appeared there and said: "All men born in
Tiruvaroor are blessed with the wisdom of the Vedas;
They form Our Hosts; this is their beatitude;
We will reveal this to you and you shall witness this."
Thus spake the Lord in grace and vanished. (1892)

28. As the Lord disappeared, he came to himself.
"What is it I have done, entertaining
A sinful thought instead of doing the *pooja?"*
Thus he mused, fear-driven; he rushed
Into the house and performed the *pooja;*
He also told his wife of the happening;
At dawn he woke up and hastened
To Tiruvaroor which he sighted ere long. (1893)

29. All that took birth and flourished in Tiruvaroor --,
The city of the Lord of the celestials --,
Were like the blue-throated Lord Himself;
Their forms glowed in growing splendour like the Lord's;
Witnessing this he folded his hands above his head
In sacred dread, fell prostrate on the ground
And felt exceedingly happy. (1894)

30. The new forms vanished and the servitor
Saw them all as they were before;
He bowed to the Lord and prayed thus:
"Forgive my fault, Oh Lord, in grace."
Then by the Lord's grace he settled in Tiruvaroor,
Performed many an act of divine service
That would ever flourish in the world,
And thus thrived. (1985)

31. As he daily served dutifully the devotees
Of the Lord, the Wearer of the Holy Ash,
For a long time in manifold ways
Meeting their several requirements
He came to be invested with the glory
Of being hailed as "The linch-pin of the servitors"
By Saint Tirunavukkarasar. (1896)

32. Naminandi Adikal who caused all good to thrive
Did many deeds of service, adored by all the worlds;
Eventually he attained the feet of the Lord
Of Tiruvaroor who sports on His crown
The crescent and the Ganga,
And comes out in festive procession
In the goodly streets of Tiruvaroor.
He is established for ever in the beauteous lustre
That glows beneath the feet of the Lord. (1897)

In Praise of Sundaramoorthi Nayanar:

"I, Arooran am a servitor
Of the Lord of Aroor."

- The *Tiru-th-Tonda-th-Tokai.*

33. In the past, as men of that town here witness,
He called back to life, on an auspicious day,
The little Brahmin-boy decked with *aimpadai* --
The one that was dead and gone --,
From the mouth of the huge and unique crocodile
In Pukkoliyoor's tank of burgeoning lotuses;
His hallowed feet would redeem them that think on them
From the irredeemable cycle of birth and death. (1898)

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